

# Christian Courier

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## CPJ critical of military spending at the expense of the poor

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) has issued a release that criticizes the federal government's Economic and Fiscal Statement released on December 2.

According to CPJ, the statement released by Finance Minister Don Mazankowski has presented Canadians with a false dilemma and forces them to choose between social/environmental programs and the national debt.

### A different set of opposites

Instead of juxtaposing national debt and cutbacks in social and environmental programs, CPJ places defence spending over against these cutbacks in the following series of statements:

"The government will purchase new navy frigates for \$10 billion while cutting into the environmental Green Plan for the second time.

"The government will purchase new military helicopters for \$4.4 billion while cutting UIC benefits by three percent, saving \$2.4 billion over two years.

"The government will purchase a \$1.1 billion low-level air defence system while cutting foreign aid to poor countries by \$642 million."

According to CPJ researcher Stephanie Baker Collins, most people expected the government to cut the purchase of new helicopters.

Asked whether CPJ is against military spending, Baker Collins replied that "at this time in our history, military spending should come second to the environment and to income security." She pointed out that in order for Canada to keep up its peacekeeping roles, some military expenses may be necessary.

At the same time she wants the government to hold the line on defence spending as long as Canada is not paying its fair share of foreign aid. "We spend a lesser percent of the GNP on foreign aid than do several other countries, she adds.



A Canadian tank in Germany.

Photo: C.C. Bles

### Greater openness

One other tendency of the present federal government that bothers CPJ is the pattern of hiding reductions. Baker Collins uses the non-indexing of child benefits as an example. Because of not indexing these benefits, what looks like an increase is in fact not an increase.

"This government never said it would go back on the principle of universality [a principle that in the past has aroused much emotion], says Baker Collins. "Yet starting with the claw-back on Family Allowances and ending with the cancellation of the Family Allowance in favour of the Child Tax Benefit, the federal government has in effect dropped universality."

Baker Collins accuses the government of resorting to cutbacks in areas not clearly visible to the average person and of consistently making things look like increases that are not increases. What CPJ and Baker Collins want from the federal government is greater honesty and a different set of priorities.

### Thinkbit:

For those people who are jealous of other people's wonderful circumstances, a cynical but somewhat comforting thought: "The grass is always greener over the septic tank."

The expression comes from the title of a book by Erma Bombeck

## K. C. Irving: a Calvinist at home, a capitalist at work

Bill Fledderus

ST. JOHN, N.B. — The legacy of reclusive New Brunswick billionaire Kenneth Colin Irving, who died December 13 at the age of 93, includes some questions about what it means to be "a Calvinist capitalist." This description, coined by a journalist in the 1960s, was said to be a source of pride for Irving, although critics argue that Christian principles are largely absent from his family's business practices.

Maritimers today express mixed feelings about Irving and the 300 companies which make his "small, family-owned Maritime business" the largest conglomerate in North America and have made his family one of the richest in the world, says Prof. John Valk of Fredericton. Irving companies employ one in 12 New Brunswickers, but many people appear to be either unimpressed or unfamiliar with any sort of "Christian" aspect of Irving's identity, though the Irvings consider themselves "ordinary, Christian folk," according to John De Mont, author of the 1991 biography *Citizens Irving*.

"If Irving was a typical Maritime Presbyterian," says Valk, "he would have been careful to keep his faith and his business isolated from each other. The Reformed idea of integrating faith and business is not strong here."

Irving was known for his regular church attendance, his personal honesty, his work ethic and his spartan lifestyle. But he was also embroiled in a number of questionable tax schemes.

Philip Lee, Irving's pastor of many years, compared him to Moses: "Here in New Brunswick [Irving] has been our leader. Here he put us to work; he showed us how to work, how to excel...he led our people from where they were to where they are. All New Brunswick weeps today, because we know that never again will we see another K. C. Irving."

Irving "was never ashamed of his See IRVING -- p. 2...

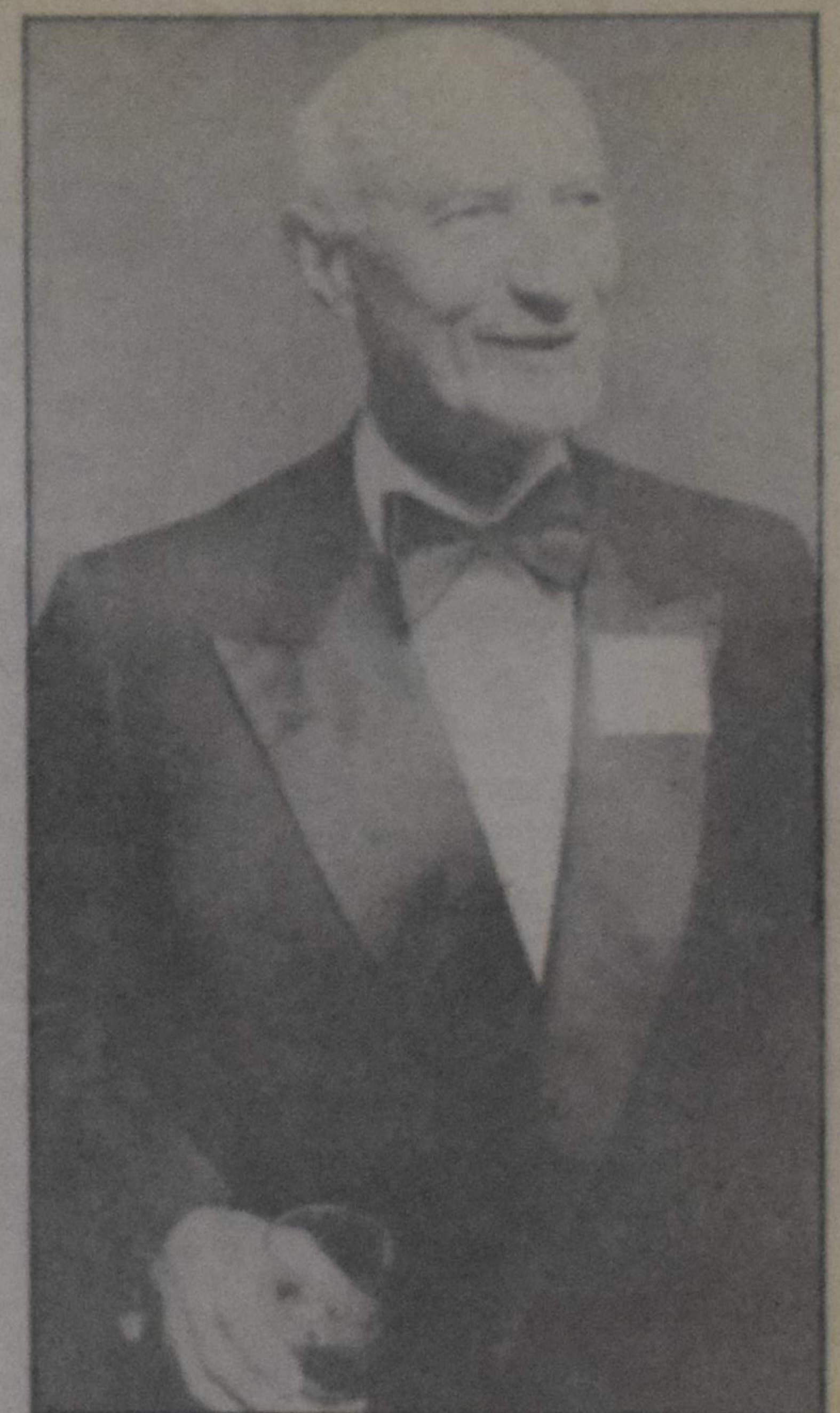


Photo: C.C. Bles

Billionaire K.C. Irving (1899-1992) at an awards dinner in 1980.

### Compared to Moses

At Irving's funeral in St. John, Rev.

### In this Issue:

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## News/Politics

## Irving family has tight economic grip

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upbringing in a small Presbyterian Church. He was not ashamed of the work ethic," eulogized Lee. "I think his Christian training in Buctouche [Irving's hometown in New Brunswick] also had much to do with his gracious and courteous spirit."

"That kind of praise was also found in all four New Brunswick daily newspapers," says Valk. "and it is little wonder, since the Irving family owns them all."

Irving himself refused to give interviews to journalists for most of his life. Associates explain that Irving was private about any Christian faith he may have had, as he was about all aspects of his personal life.

## No vices, no hobbies

Ralph Allen, a journalist who profiled Irving for *Maclean's* in the 1960s, once wrote, "all the people who know the slightest thing about K. C. Irving know that he works 14 hours a day, 16 hours a day, 18 hours a day, all day, every day; does not smoke, does not drink, does not listen to music, does not look at paintings, does not read, does not — although he owns some of the world's greatest salmon clubs — even fish; everybody knows that aside from going to church in the St. John and St. Stephen Presbyterian Church every Sunday he does not have any hobby but work."

From this and other testimonies, it becomes apparent that at least the public part of Irving's Presbyterianism had more to do with the work ethic, morals and lifestyle than with spirituality.

"The tenets of his parents' Presbyterian faith clearly coloured...Irving's business philosophy and his personal habits throughout his life," writes De Mont. The Presbyterianism Irving grew up with did not judge that spiritual virtues were necessarily in conflict with "economic virtues," according to De Mont, but instead "recognized and applauded them. Hard work, prudence and thrift were the foundations of Presbyterianism."

Born into a wealthy Scots

Presbyterian family, Irving began his career by borrowing enough money to found the Irving Oil Co. and soon diversified into service stations, trucking, shipping, lumber, pulp and paper, the media and other areas.

"People who knew him described him as a gentleman: kindly, considerate, courteous and polite," says Russ Hunt in a recent Canadian Press interview. Hunt is co-author of *K.C. Irving: The Art of the Industrialist*.

Whatever Irving's personality, when it came to business he was aggressive, ambitious and unforgiving, say other commentators, and his sons carry on that tradition, as is shown in their recent attempts to expand in New England.

Insiders point to Irving's ability to get tax concessions, tax exemptions, subsidies and grants as one of the reasons for his success. Certainly, he saved a great deal of money in taxes by moving to Bermuda in the 1970s. Valk explains that this departure from New Brunswick is held against him by many New Brunswickers.

"The Irvings have a tight grip on the New Brunswick economy and they deal ruthlessly with anyone who tries to start up some competition against them," says Valk.

De Mont's analysis supports Valk's opinion. De Mont also points out that part of the Irving stranglehold lies in the way their companies support each other. "What exists is an airtight world, where all the [Irving] businesses feed off one another and where few pennies are spent which do not go back into Irving coffers," writes De Mont. It is official Irving policy that businesses are only permitted to purchase from other Irving businesses, if at all possible, even when someone else may offer a better price.

## Practices questioned

Because of Irving's desire for privacy, little is known about his financial generosity (or lack thereof). His sons, however, are now grudgingly becoming more aware of the importance of a good corporate image and have begun making

public gifts and bequests.

Critics also resent the Irvings' wealth and their powerful influence over the province's government.

"Critics claim that [Irving] interests have often been served at the expense of the taxpayers and the environment. Irving's domination of the New Brunswick media symbolizes for many the negative aspect of the power he wields," writes Mary Halloran of the *Canadian Encyclopedia*.

Critics also point to the ter-

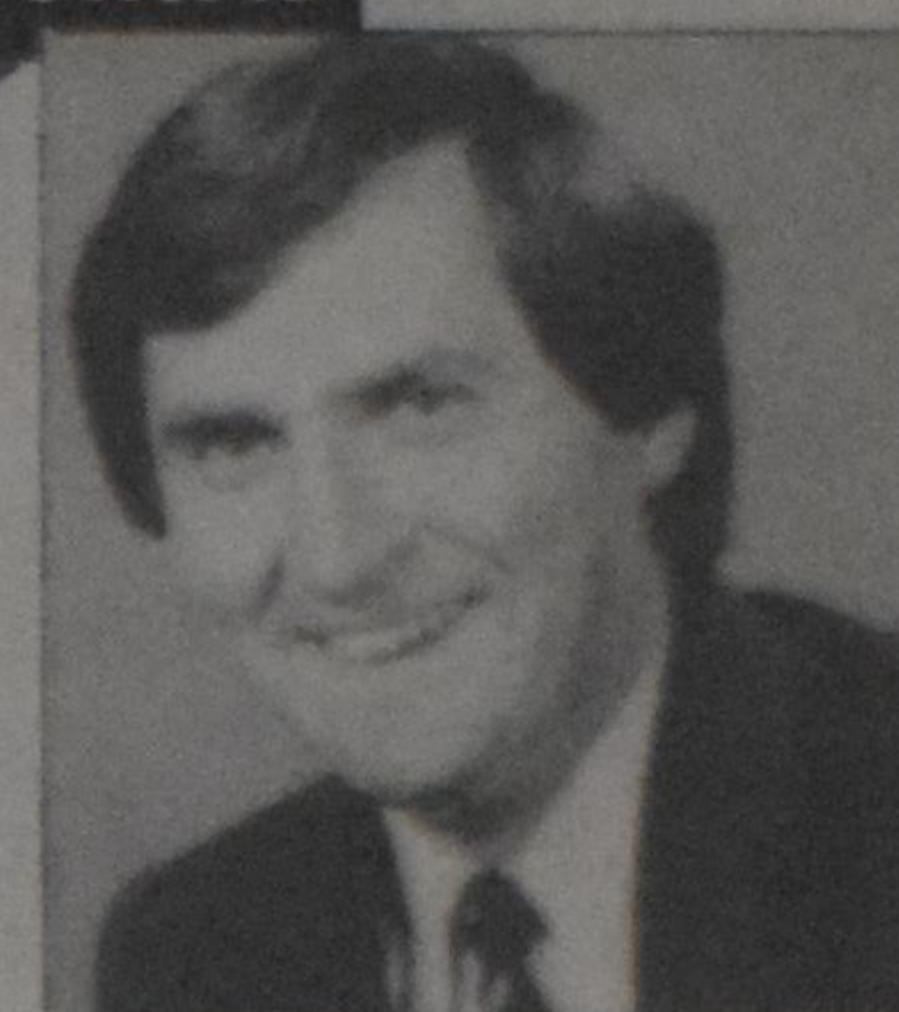
rrible pollution problems in St. John, caused by Irving industry.

Irving's three sons have run the 300 family-owned companies since the 1970s: son Arthur is president of Irving Oil

Ltd., James is president of Saint John Shipbuilding Ltd. and John runs a wide variety of smaller holdings, mostly in Atlantic Canada and New England.



## Perspective on Politics



Paul Marshall

## Western blinkers

As most of the world is now aware, militant Hindus recently destroyed the 430-year-old Babri mosque in Ayodhya, northern India. They believed that the mosque had been built on the site of the birthplace of the Hindu god-king Rama, that it was an offence to Rama and that it must be removed.

Amid the tragic stories coming out of India about this destruction and the consequent violence between Muslims and Hindus, there have been attempts by Western commentators to help explain it all. One such story tried to clarify things by referring to the activity of "right-wing Hindu fundamentalists."

It wasn't so much the reappearance of the Western pop sociological/psychological cliché "fundamentalism" that caught my eye. Rather, it was the appearance of that other journalistic substitute for analysis: "right-wing."

I wondered what "right-wing" Hindu fundamentalists might be and how they might differ from "left-wing Hindu fundamentalists," assuming there are such creatures.

"Right-wing" is one of those terms, like "left-wing," "liberal," "conservative," and of course, "fundamentalist," by which Westerners try to pretend that other people in the world are really just like us; or else that they are really insane.

## What's going on?

For quite a few months now I have found it almost literally impossible to understand much of the news coming out of the former Soviet Union. Boris Yeltsin is apparently continually being hounded by "conservatives," as was Gorbachev before him. Who are these "conservatives"? Well, for a while it was a term used to refer to "old-guard" communists.

At first this struck me as a little strange — communists as "conservatives"? But one can see that it makes some sense. The communists want to go back to the previously existing situation, so in that sense they want to *conserve*. But meanwhile, the same newspaper is using the same term "conservative" to refer to the neo-Nazi outbreaks in Germany. And now the term is also being used to describe the Rus-

sian nationalists who want to crack down on minorities and who are also showing some alarming anti-Semitism, and it's used for those members of the Russian parliament who recently elected one of their own number as prime minister in defiance of Yeltsin.

## Back to the French Revolution

What on earth can these hackneyed terms mean? Their origins lie in responses to the French Revolution. Those who wanted to push the revolution along sat on the left side of the assembly; those who wanted to slow it down sat on the right. Then the terms became used largely to describe attitudes to government intervention in the economy.

Now it seems to be assumed that the fundamental — and only rational — political question is how to make the economy grow. So the only meaningful political division is between those who think more government will do it and those who think less is the answer. So every political conflict is reduced to left and right, liberal and conservative.

But occasionally there are those strange people who refuse to be shut into these terms, who persist in dragging other concerns into the political arena. What about them?

Well, now we have a term for them too: they're "fundamentalists." "Fundamentalism" has become the term that Western secularists use to describe those people who they neither understand nor want to understand. It's slightly more polite than "lunatic" but has essentially the same meaning.

And so we have our categories all lined up. The newspapers will label people "right" or "left," "conservative," "liberal" or "fundamentalist." That's the way we get the news.

The only problem is that we never get the slightest inkling of what it is that drives people other than secular Westerners to act. We grow ever more ignorant of what is actually happening in the world.

*Paul Marshall is senior member in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.*



## News Comment

## Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



## Pressreview

**H**appy New Year! When you weigh yourself may your scale be ever user-friendly; may your mind be ever connected to your vocal cords; and may the reign of *shalom* surround you. And as 1993 begins remember the word of Cardinal Newman: "I do not fear to die, I fear not having begun to live."

★ ★ ★

Will it be a good year for Monsieur, or for Numero Uno, or for Yukon Audrey? Who knows? Maybe the better question is: Will it be a good year for Canadians? There are signs of impending economic improvement. Cash registers cre-

scended during the pre-Christmas season.

★ ★ ★

**T**he *Times-News* of Thunder Bay was all bubbly with the news of more than a billion dollars in orders for Bombardier, and the Bank of Canada kept lowering the interest rates.

Before we all begin to do the economic hip-hip-hurrah let's remember that the feds are still spending \$34 billion more than they have. Add to that the provincial deficits and you come to the astonishing insight the Canadian governments will add, in 1993, nearly \$60 billion (almost one-tenth the value of the entire annual economy) to their already atmospheric \$560 billion debt. How's that for a wet blanket on economic recovery? *Business Week* hit the nail on the head when it said of the American economy, "It is stronger, but it's no Schwarzenegger." Ditto here.

★ ★ ★

There is a bit of a spat between the newly wed Air Canada and Continental. The honeymoon seems to be over already. Air Canada wants to trim Continental's operations and bestow on Continental its

old DC-9s. Continental, *au contraire*, wants to add to its routes and buy new planes. Ah well, they have to get used to each other.

Canadian Airlines received a total of \$70 million from British Columbia and Alberta. That will keep the pilots in coffee for a couple more weeks.

★ ★ ★

**A**lberta's new premier let it be known that he is a man who can carry a grudge with ease. Any Tory who ever opposed him in any way has been relegated to benches further back than the legislature's furnace room.

★ ★ ★

What's with these trains in our land? They keep jumping the rails like young lambs skipping in the meadows — about 100 times a year. The last derailment, in Manitoba, ruined Christmas for a lot of people there.

★ ★ ★

**T**he Liquor Control Board of Ontario is puzzled about a 6.7 percent or \$30 million decline in sales. Wake up, guys. Many people have lost more than 6.7 percent of their incomes — and have you taken a look at your prices lately?

★ ★ ★

John Crosbie, our Fisheries Minister who is rumoured to be quitting as soon as he can do so without admitting defeat, had a victory of sorts when the European Community agreed to limit its cod catches. Crosbie's political career has not been without disappointments. Remember that in the short-lived Clark cabinet he proposed to add about four cents in tax to a litre of gasoline? There went the Clark cabinet, down like a scuttled, rusted cargo ship.

★ ★ ★

**R**evenue Canada has cheerful news (for one group of Canadians anyway): it reports that the number of wealthy Canadians who escaped paying any income taxes continued to rise in the 1990 taxation year. According to the department there are 35,850 Canadians in the elite tax brack-

et with incomes over \$250,000.

★ ★ ★

The *Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal* has no hearing impairment. It overheard children singing in an Ottawa school yard at recess: "We're tiny/we're tuneey/we can't afford a loonie/because of Brian Mulroney." Out of the mouth of babes....

★ ★ ★

**B**ig Blue (IBM) is in trouble. The company has recently been suffering from a lack of vision, as one former top executive said. The results are mass, international lay-offs; thousands of IBMers are getting pink-slipped.

★ ★ ★

The European Community is suffering from disharmony that lingers like a low fever with no cure. France, which was one of the main backers of European union, is now using its clout to lobby other E.C. members to block the farm-trade accord that was negotiated between Washington and the E.C. Britain has postponed ratifying the Maastricht treaty, and Germany is hassling everybody with its high interest rates. Germany needs money to rebuild the eastern sector of the country.

★ ★ ★

**S**ociologists have announced the arrival of a new generation, since the baby boomers are about ready to go into retirement. The new population wave is formed by

the "baby busters." Busters are the first generation of latch-key children, products of dual-career households, and in 50 percent of cases, of divorced or separated parents.

★ ★ ★

There was rebellion in Kemerad Yeltsin's cabinet and Boris had to hurry home to put out the fire.

★ ★ ★

**T**he world is changing so fast it gets harder and harder to keep up: there's a standing-room-only McDonalds two blocks from Tiananmen Square in Beijing; the British are driving Japanese cars; the Democrats will shortly move into the White House; and blue jeans can be seen in church services. Keeping up is like trying to catch a firefly by daylight.

★ ★ ★

Some things, alas, never change: Serbian savagery; Palestinians in poverty and peril; the IRA exploding bombs in busy stores; Somalia's insanity — all of it adding up to an overdraft of violence all over the world, our own country not excluded.

★ ★ ★

**A**nd here is my last New Year's wish for you all: May God keep you close to his bosom.

*Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and is chaplaincy coordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church. He lives in Kingston, Ont.*

## Christian Courier

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## Editorial

# The age of holy places is past

Last month, a Hindu mob stormed a 400-year-old mosque in northern India and demolished it. The ancient mosque had been erected on an even more ancient Hindu site. Muslims in other parts of the world retaliated by destroying Hindu temples.

In a world where collective memories go back a long way, this vengeful action is understandable. But to Western eyes the settling of a 400-year-old score seems a little ridiculous. I say "Western eyes" with special intent because most of us watched film clips of the event on television. It's difficult to get into the spirit of religious wars while you're

sipping a cup of Maxwell House in a North American sitting room.

Besides, the concept of holy sites is not familiar to most Protestant Christian and post-Christian Westerners. It's part of our distant heritage in that the Old Testament time clearly upheld the idea of holy sites. Jerusalem had been chosen by God as the holy city and the temple as the only place where sacrifices were to be offered. Attempts by some Israelite kings to erect holy places elsewhere met with God's strong disapproval.

## Worship in spirit

But the coming of Jesus Christ changed all that. The cleansing of the temple may have given the impression that Jesus would continue the practice of holy sites, but what he was doing there was upholding the intent of God for worship and denouncing the practice of commercialism at a time when the temple was still the place where God would meet his people.

But at another time, when Jesus met a Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar, Jesus indicated to her that the time of holy places was over. He said, "A time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain [Mount Gerazim, which Samaritans considered sacred] nor in Jerusalem.... A time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth."

With the coming of Jesus a new age with new rules had arrived. And one of the new rules was that place is no longer important to the worship of God because spirit and truth are not bound by place.

## An ancient quarrel

It is interesting to note that the quarrel over holy places between Hindus and Muslims finds its parallel in the history of conflict between Jews and Samaritans. The Samaritans had built a temple on Mount Gerazim around the year 400 B.C. near Jacob's well, where Jesus was resting. This temple had been a source of offense to the Jews, primarily because there was a constant argument between them and the Samaritans about where God wanted to be worshipped: on Mount Gerazim or in Jerusalem?

But there was a second irritant for the Jews. In the Samaritan Scriptures Mount Gerazim was the mountain on which Moses had commanded an altar to be built, and in the Jewish Scriptures it was Mount Ebal, about

five miles north of Mount Gerazim as the raven flies (See Joshua 8:30,31 for the Jewish version). And it did not help that the temple was built near a spot sacred to the Jews: Jacob's well.

The Samaritan temple was still standing when Jesus was talking to the Samaritan woman, but the Jews would destroy it about 100 years later. If television cameras had recorded the event we would have seen an action similar to what was recorded in northern India: people enthusiastically climbing a sturdy building with picks and axes and turning it into rubble. Their fanatical act represented the settling of a 500-year-old quarrel!

## Christianity is unique

The Jews would not have destroyed the Samaritan temple had they understood the significance of the coming of Jesus Christ. And the Hindus and the Muslims would not have done what they did had they understood that Jesus Christ had ushered in a new age.

Christianity is the only major religion in the world that does not believe in holy sites and holy buildings, although the Roman Catholic branch of Christianity reinforces the idea of sacred places by the use of altars and holy water to declare something sacred.

## Everything belongs to God

Why should Christians condemn the destruction of someone else's place of worship if they do not recognize that these places are holy places? Because they believe that the whole world and everything that's in it belongs to the Lord (Psalm 24). In that sense, every place is holy ground.

Consequently, one should never wilfully and hatefully destroy anything, whether it be a temple, an abortion clinic, the reputation of someone we disagree with, a tree, or our bodies. All of these, in a non-panteistic way, have the stamp of God's ownership on them.

A sense of awe for God's creation and God's imagebearers also means that we must respect the feelings of other human beings, even as they worship what they do not know.

But coupled with that respect should go our fervor to tell others about the true worship of God so that they may worship what they do know. That, after all, was the point of Jesus' ministry as he reached out to the Samaritan woman and the people of Sychar.

BW

## Christian Courier

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## Letters

## Baker Collins' response to Sarlo disappointing

As I was slowly churning my way through Christopher Sarlo's book *Poverty in Canada* the December 4 issue of CC, pleasurably graced my doorstep, complete with a review on the very book in my hands. Unfortunately, the reviewer's goal seems not to review the strengths and weaknesses of Sarlo's book but rather to question the "authenticity of his concern for the poor."

Somewhere lost in the ideological affront Baker Collins feels from Sarlo is the fact that *Poverty in Canada* is an excellent book focusing on two matters: 1) critiquing the prevailing approaches to defining and measuring poverty in Canada, and 2) attempting to establish a credible alternative approach based on "poverty as lacking in necessities."

## Relative measures not helpful

Baker Collins believes poverty is income inequality and declines to take up Sarlo's in-depth critique of the hopeless inadequacy of using low income lines (which measure income inequality) as a poverty statistic. The use of relative measures of income inequality means that if we lived in a country where a quarter of the population made a million a year and everyone else more than two million, the poverty groups would stand on Parliament Hill screaming that 25 percent of all Canadians live in dire poverty.

Poverty levels change if a country is stinking rich or near starvation, although Baker Collins would have people believe otherwise. For example, real income of the bottom fifth of the U.S. population has increased fivefold since 1930; yet their percentage of total national income has remained constant over this time. So while relative inequality has remained constant, absolute poverty has fallen dramatically.

Until we can identify the true extent

of poverty and make our analysis tractable over time through using absolute scales, solutions will not be found. The losers will not be the poverty professionals, but rather our hurting poor.

## Sarlo is concerned about poverty

The sheer number of times that Baker Collins misquotes and misconstrues Sarlo's arguments is disappointing to say the least. She quotes the author as saying income inequality doesn't offend him. Unfortunately she doesn't provide the page reference or the context. Here is the context:

"They [the developers of poverty lines] are more offended by inequality than poverty. The relative approach rests squarely on this ideological bias and any thorough critique must challenge this premise. I am not at all offended by inequality. . . . I am, however, deeply offended by poverty, by situations in which people are simply not able to acquire all the basic necessities of life, by children forced to line up at food banks. Poverty is the problem, not inequality." (p.3)

Sarlo is concerned with absolute poverty; Baker Collins states this can only be done "by ignoring the link between poverty and inequality." If she is implying a link exists between *absolute* poverty and inequality then she is grievously mistaken. There is almost NO correlation between these two variables, as can be seen from the example given above.

The lone area where Baker Collins' criticisms do hold some weight is in analyzing Sarlo's "basket of necessities" (items that provide for basic needs) which I believe is overly restrictive. Sarlo anticipates such a complaint and responds: "You might agree with my necessities approach to the measure-

ment of poverty but disagree with my list of necessities. Fair enough!" (p. 198) For Baker Collins this "raises questions about the adequacy of an absolute definition of poverty." Yet arguments over the basket's contents do not constitute a flaw in the necessities approach. In fact all her listed needs could simply be incorporated into the basket of necessities.

## Reviewer shortchanged author

Baker Collins unfortunately concludes by again misquoting Sarlo, and thereby dramatically altering the author's message. Sarlo contends that in the long run, "there is no reason for anyone to be *permanently* poor" (p. 194). In other words, our society offers enough opportunity for people to pay for their basic needs eventually in the course of their lives. Baker Collins left out the word "permanently" in her

quote, thus leaving the reader to believe erroneously that Sarlo is stupid enough to conclude his work by saying "there is no reason for the poor to be poor."

In trying to establish that Sarlo has little concern for the poor, the reviewer Baker Collins gives Sarlo's lucid book short shrift at best. The only losers from such an unbalanced treatment of a thought-provoking book are the poor.

Common sense tells us that poverty is lacking the necessities to live and pursue opportunities. Sarlo diligently attempts to formulate a needs-based poverty statistic. *Poverty in Canada* is an important book, and deserves a better fate than the one given it by Stephanie Baker Collins.

Mike Loenen,  
Edmonton, Alta

## Retirement complex cannot offer 'abundant life'

When I looked through the last issue of the *Christian Courier* (Dec. 4, p. 13), I was shocked to read the advertisement placed by Gorham Park, from Newmarket, Ont. In their ad reference was made to the words of Jesus spoken in John 10:10, when he said, "that you might have life and . . . have it more abundantly."

You are not sending out a Christian message when you use the words of Jesus to advertise material things for a number of reasons: "abundant life" comes from within, not through circumstances; "abundant life" comes through total surrender to Jesus so that

we can be regenerated through the Holy Spirit; "abundant life" is "living for Jesus" as the hymn indicates; "abundant life" comes through trusting and obeying.

We are allowed to enjoy the pleasure of convenience and beauty. All I want to say is, Jesus was not talking about material things when he promised us abundant life.

Anneke Opden Dries  
Rocky Mountain House, Alta

## Response:

We totally agree with your letter. We could point to the caveat in the masthead on page 4 that reads: "The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by either *Christian Courier* or *Calvinist Contact Publishing*," but that would be too easy. A more responsible reply is that, in the rush of putting our promotional issue together, we overlooked this unfortunate use of Scripture. Please note that we have already corrected this mistake in a subsequent issue.

Editor

(For another letter to the editor see bottom of page 6)

## Pontius' Puddle





# 'Spaghetti Man'

Robert Parlante

I was twelve time zones away near the Mongolian border of Siberia when I tasted the bitterness of an ethnic slur. An unlikely place. I was in Krasnoyarsk half way around the world from New York as a member of a mission of mercy team distributing New Testaments to schoolchildren.

In this city of one million people I came to experience the sting of being called a "Spaghetti Man."

Part of our lay missionary assignment was to present the core message of Jesus Christ and salvation to thousands of schoolchildren. Not able to speak Russian, I was assigned a translator. Her name was Anne, an English teacher at the city university.

At first, we exchanged a few typical pleasantries. Like her father was Jewish. She was married to an Armenian and had one child. Life in Krasnoyarsk was difficult beyond measure.

I told her I was married with three children. That my mother's family and my father came from northern Italy. But there was a sudden coolness at that revelation, like I'd said something wrong or maybe she didn't understand me.

Nevertheless, through our week-long stay, we learned to work well together. Our first presentations were shaky. I talked too fast. She didn't understand some American idioms. We laughed and learned to respect one another.

More important, I sensed Anne was being touched by the Gospel message of salvation as she translated my testimony to the schoolchildren.

At our last evening together, during a dinner for the mission team and translators, she felt the need to be honest about her initial dim view of me. Anne related how she even told her husband that of all the American missionaries in Siberia she ended up with a spaghetti man!

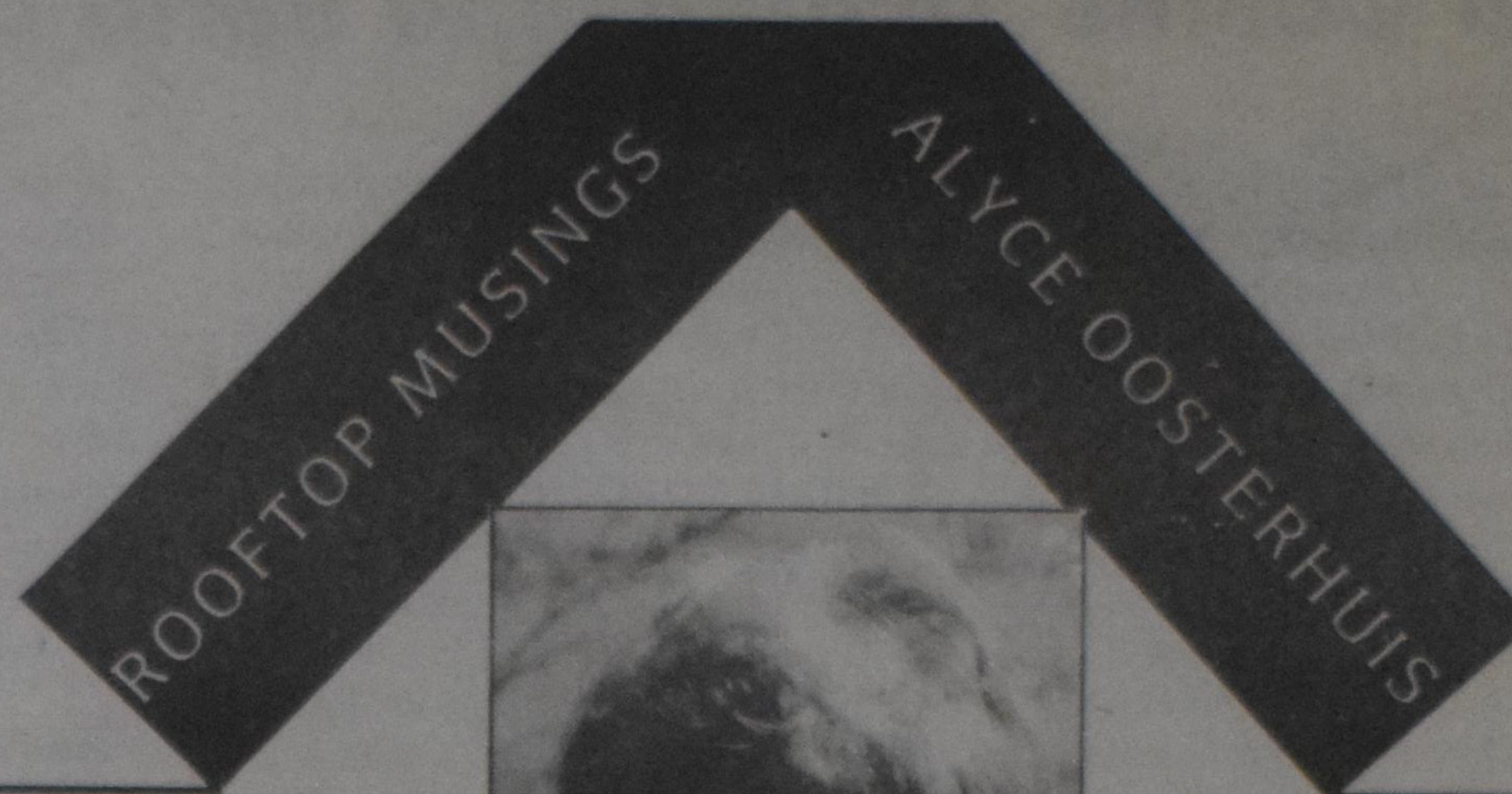
It seemed in this distant part of Russia, a spaghetti man label is associated with laziness, stupidity, and sitting around all day drinking Chianti wine. Because I was of Italian heritage, she painted me with the same disrespectful brush. But then Anne told me how she asked God to forgive her. She asked for my forgiveness.

None of the labels applied to me. Yet my first reaction was still anger. It was not so much a personal hurt, but the fact that we sometimes make sweeping characterizations of God's people.

But thank God for the power of his Word. By her own admission Anne was moved by the Gospel message, as well as the missionary team's enthusiasm for the Lord's work and their willingness to come to such a remote place.

Today in Russia there is one less person so quick to label another one of God's creation.

*Robert Parlante lives in Closter, New Jersey*



## 'Cocooning'

The 1990s have been dubbed "the decade of cocooning" in recognition of the fact that increasing numbers of families and individuals are spending their evenings at home with their VCRs, board games, computer programs and in-house employment. Having just experienced such a "cocooning" time in the holiday season, I know whereof the experts speak. And as I look ahead at the New Year, I shudder to think of what cocooning will do to our Christian community involvements.

There was a time when being a community member meant that one attended the functions hosted by the various organizations which professed shared values and vision for a leavening change in Canadian society.

Thus in the '70s and '80s we would not have thought of missing a Christian Farmers' banquet, a Committee for Public Justice forum, a Christian Labour Association panel discussion, a King's College annual meeting, a Christian Home and School information evening, a congregational meeting, a guest lecturer from a Christian institution, a concerned member's call for reform.

Of course, that was before we had children who started to make demands on our time and

energy. It was also before we had work obligations that tended to consume our days and sometimes the weekends. It was definitely before we had reached those middle ages when we measure life in terms of remaining decades and seek to leave a memorable legacy with those who are closest and dearest to us: our siblings, our children, our grandchildren, our most intimate friends.

## It's in the genes?

As our community's aging "baby boomers" increasingly look towards their immediate kinsfolk for the fulfilment of their needs for significance, sociobiologists are affirming that cocooning with our own gene pool is no more and no less than the realization of our most basic and most lofty social predispositions. The degree of our genetic relatedness can predict the extent of our social concern for others.

So, what of those who stand outside the pale of our genetic

relatedness? What is to happen to those who are strangers, unaffiliated, friendless? And what is to be done for all those organizations which depend upon ideological rather than genetic relatedness for their work and impact in society?

For all those who are alone, dispossessed and unaffiliated, my wish for the New Year is that no acquaintance will draw the cocoon so tight that you are excluded. My hope for all of us who are tempted to cocoon now is that 1993 will renew a vibrancy and vitality to encourage us to include those who are on the fringes. And, it is to be hoped, as we spin we continue to cast crucial threads that keep us attached to our community organizations.

Cocooning can be a wonderfully relaxing, values-sustaining enterprise of feeling loved and worthwhile in the "bosom" of one's family. It can also be a stifling, individualistic concern with one's own well-being to the exclusion of concern about others. May 1993 be the year in which we all examine the contours and confines of our "cocoon."

*Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of education and psychology at The King's College, Edmonton.*

## Letter:

## Mennonite light shines brightly

In the Dec. 11 issue of C.C. Rev. J. Kuntz included reflections on the referendum printed in four church papers. After having read them, I discovered that the fourth one, reprinted from *The Mennonite Brethren Herald*, differed from the other

three in that it gave a mild rebuke to Prime Minister Mulroney for playing politics with the people of Canada.

My reaction to this fourth article was: "Last but not least." It touched the very heart of the problem of poor leadership.

Reading this article made me say, "Many thanks, Brethren."

I always admire the word and deed ministry of the Mennonite Central Committee

They practise what Jesus instructed in Matthew 5:16 — "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your

father in heaven."

Let us encourage each other to let our light shine.

**Enno Ennema**  
Chatham, Ont.



## Cinema/Arts

## Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

## Toys

## Rated PG

Stars Robin Williams, Michael Gambon, Joan Cusack, Robin Wright, LL Cool J

Written by Valerie Curtin and Barry Levinson

Directed by Barry Levinson

*Toys* raised great expectations. Its trailers (previews in theatres and on TV) were unusually inventive; it stars the wildly creative Robin Williams and respected British actor Michael Gambon; and it's directed by Barry Levinson, whose pictures like *Diner* show he's capable of making a good film. Despite all that, the film is a huge disappointment.

The plot involves a family toy company owned by Kenneth Zevo. As Kenneth is dying of heart problems he summons his older brother, Leland, a three-star retired general (Michael Gambon). Kenneth wants Leland to take over the company because he doesn't believe his flaky son, Leslie, (Robin Williams) is ready for such a task.

But no sooner is Ken dead and buried than the General decides the firm should make war toys, a philosophy diametrically opposed to everything Zevo Toys has always stood for. It doesn't take long for Leland to literally take over the factory. And he secretly works, not on toys, but on a real war plan to be executed using children and remotely controlled miniaturized weapons.

Leslie and his sister (who, we find out, is actually a robot), and a few other non-militaristic souls, are too "childlike" to figure out what's going on until it's too late. But these characters aren't really childlike; they're just mentally off in another dimension, though it's one dimension, not three — they're simply weird and shallow. Incidentally, Barry Levinson keeps Robin Williams under tight control here, so much so that it appears Williams has little to do. If he had been given the freedom to ad lib, his stock in trade, *Toys* would at least have been funny.

## Exploitation

When Leslie and friends finally do get their act together and confront the General, it's an excuse for a very long, very violent battle which pits General Zevo and his war toys against the "kids" and their kinder, gentler toys.

The main premise of *Toys* is anti-violence, but in preaching its message the film exploits violence so that it can use all kinds of razzle-dazzle special effects (and, one suspects, because *somebody* among those making the film enjoyed playing with all those remote controlled tanks and helicopters).

A word should also be said about the setting and sets for *Toys*. Zevo Toys is a space-age building out in the middle of a vast expanse of green, undulating grain fields. It is full of huge, molded plastic and fibreglass animals which spit out toy parts to dancing, prancing workers below who assemble the toys. The management offices are playrooms. Hallways have hills and are traversed in little golf-cart-like cars.

But this is not a warm and inviting place. On the contrary, there's a sterility about all those primary colours, and all that white and chrome, and hard plastic and other synthetic materials; it's surreal rather than soothing.

One last point. Though its title and its trailers imply otherwise, this is *not* a children's movie: the characters are bizarre, the action violent, the setting antiseptic; there's some profanity and even an implied sex scene. Not even Robin Williams could save this one.

## Art gallery acquires 'spectacular' works by Monet, Chagall, La Tour, Boudin, Beuys

TORONTO (AGO) — When the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) re-opens to the public on Jan. 24, 1993, several recent acquisitions, described as "spectacular" by museum curators, will be on display for the first time.

The "new" works include two paintings by French Impressionist Claude Monet, a "superb and very rare" Georges de La Tour canvas, an "outstanding" work by French landscape painter Eugene Boudin, a gouache by Russian painter Marc Chagall and a blackboard by German artist Joseph Beuys.

## New view of the Baroque

*St. Anne with the Christ Child* by La Tour was painted between 1639-1641 and represents the Virgin Mary's mother watching over the newborn Jesus. The work is the only La Tour painting in Canada, and one of only a handful in North America. La Tour was born in 1593 in eastern France and died of the plague in 1652. Only about 40 of his paintings are known to have survived the

political, social and religious upheavals of 17th century Lorraine.

Scholarly interest in his work was revived in 1915; in 1972 a La Tour exhibition was held in Paris. "The impact of the rediscovery of La Tour has been compared to the importance of the rediscovery of Vermeer in the 19th century. Identification of the works of both artists substantially re-defined the way we look at Baroque art," say experts at the AGO.

The newly acquired works by Monet are *Charing Cross Bridge: Fog* and *Etretat: L'Aiguille and the Porte d'Aval*. The first work is one of 34 views of London's Charing Cross bridge painted by Monet between 1899 and 1904 as part of his "Thames" series. *Etretat* (1885-86) is a depiction of "two jutting and eroded cliffs that were well-known coastal landmarks" near Etretat, a small seaside village in Normandy.

## Adam and Eve and a blackboard

Chagall's *Temptation* is a

gouache study painted in 1911 in Paris. It's thought to represent Adam and Eve in Eden, since Chagall was frequently inspired by the Old Testament during this period.

The last work included among AGO's new acquisitions is not an art work, as such. It is a blackboard full of lecture notes made by German artist Joseph Beuys on May 8, 1976, just after he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree by the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax. Beuys's notes on his "theory of social sculpture" were preserved and the entire blackboard has become part of AGO's contemporary collection. AGO curators say that Beuys was "the most significant and influential German artist of the post-war years."

Four of the six newly acquired works were anonymously donated to the art gallery.

The painting below is an example of the work of Georges La Tour. It is *Mary Magdalen with Oil Lamp* painted between 1635-1640, the same period during which he painted the AGO's new acquisition, *St. Anne with the Christ Child*.

## Music award celebrates Canadian creativity

OTTAWA (Canadian Scene) — Canadian music professionals — performers, conductors, composers, critics, administrators — have just finished submitting nominations for the first *Jean A. Chalmers National Music Award*. The \$20,000 award, created by publisher Floyd S. Chalmers and administered by the Ontario Arts Council will be presented to a performer or ensemble that has made "an outstanding contribution to Canadian musical creativity."





## Church

## Visiting Filipino deacon recommends further diaconal exchanges

Bill Fledderus

BURLINGTON, Ont. (CRWRC) — Josephine Cabalfin, a diaconal administrator from the Christian Reformed churches of the southwestern Philippines, was inspired and renewed by her recent visit to Canada, she says. She recommends that Canadian deacons come to the Philippines, where she believes they would also learn a great deal and be inspired for their future work.

Cabalfin's visit was sponsored by the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) in association with local diaconal conferences.

Cabalfin observed that the Christian Reformed churches in the Philippines are more open to women's leadership in

diaconal ministry than those in Canada. In fact, the majority of deacons in the Philippines are women, she says.

### Not all poor are 'poor'

Deacons in the Philippines are also more directly involved in poverty alleviation, she says. "In Canada, the poor most often still have a roof over their heads, food to eat and access to health care," she explains. "For us, some of the people we work with are really at the survival stage." (Eighty percent of Filipinos are said to live below the poverty line.)

While most of the Canadian deacons she met are personally well off, Cabalfin points out that the diaconal conferences she helps administer involve both "deacons who are more or less rich" as well as deacons

"coming from squatter areas...who have virtually no income or education." One of Cabalfin's jobs is to encourage them to work together, she says, which can be a challenging task.

### No Bethlehem Place

If Canadian deacons came to the Philippines, Cabalfin would want to show them the extremes of society: the extremely poor and the extremely rich. She would show them some of the communities where deacons have assisted people in getting organized and working together in cooperatives.

"We don't have Bethlehem Place or Shalom Manor to show you," she laughs (referring to two impressive Niagara-area Christian Reformed diaconal projects). "We just have nipa huts and families caring for their elderly."

Deacons in the Philippines have an exciting goal to work towards: "We want to become sending missionaries," she says. "We want to serve not



Photo courtesy CRWRC

Josephine Cabalfin observes that diaconal ministry in the Philippines is more open to women than here in Canada.

only in the Philippines but also in other countries in Asia. Perhaps the Philippines might be in a better position to do that because we can identify with the culture of Asia. That's our vision...we need to build on that."

But right now the biggest challenge facing deacons in the Philippines is simply meeting the massive needs of their own country. "On top of poverty, we

always have these natural disasters that strike us," she says. "There's just so much need — you have to prioritize. What we need most of all is to strengthen the churches to respond to all sorts of needs and to build up resources."

## Baptists decry 'Course in Miracles' books

ATLANTA, Ga. (EP) — A book by Marianne Williamson, which was recently given a big boost by talk show host Oprah Winfrey, is deceptive New Age teaching, warns the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Williamson's book, *A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of "A Course in Miracles,"* so impressed Winfrey that she bought a copy of the book for everyone in her audience and invited Williamson for a second show.

Williamson's book is based on her experience with *A Course in Miracles*, a three-volume set of books published in 1975 by Helen Schucman, a Jewish atheist. Other commentaries have been published as well.

"The Course," as it's often called, includes a workbook with 365 lessons; about 1,500 groups in the U.S. meet each week to study The Course, according to *Christianity Today*.

### Christ the medium, not mediator

The contents of The Course were supposedly "channeled"

by a voice claiming to be Jesus Christ. But Southern Baptist interfaith specialist Maurice Smith says The Course "is a radical denial of every basic Bible teaching." Smith notes that the contradiction with Scripture may not be immediately apparent to all believers because the material uses language familiar to Christians.

One example is the title itself. While Christians think of miracles as supernatural acts of a personal God, The Course teaches that miracles are "changes in your understanding of reality."

Smith explains, "The primary focus is that what you see is not real and you can change your own reality. The past and the future are not important. Only the present as you create it by your thoughts is important. Only what is pleasant is real."

Additionally, The Course teaches that sin is allowing negative things to happen, that people can heal themselves by changing the way they think, and that God is something each person can become.

## InterVarsity plans conference for black students

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — African Americans, a group generally neglected by evangelical Christians, were invited by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship to a conference in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 27-31. The national student conference "was designed to show students how Jesus Christ offers hope in the midst of despair, and a new future in the midst of alienation and discouragement," says Tony Warner in a news release.

InterVarsity believes that those students who give their allegiance to Jesus Christ will become good leaders and agents for transformation in these troubled times. They should be empowered to serve and witness for Christ on their campuses, within their profes-

sions and around the world, says IVCF.

Featured speakers included Elward Ellis, who is now the president of Destiny Movement and was once an IVCF staff leader mandated especially to serve black students.

Each morning at the conference students were led in Bible expositions from the book of Exodus. Speakers emphasized God's activity among his people and how he hears

their groans, delivers them from oppression, provides for them and teaches them his ways. They were also shown that God transforms the gifts of people for his own purpose.

Those attending also celebrated a historic prayer meeting among African-American students that took place 25 years ago at the "Urbana 67" student mission conference.

<b>AMSTERDAM</b>		<b>EARLY BIRD FARES</b>	
		<b>SPRING 1993</b>	
DUSSELDORF	wereld contact travel	PARIS	FROM \$ 399
COPENHAGEN		LONDON	
FROM \$ 499		MANCHESTER	
FLORIDA	Emergency service available		
from \$149 + Free car	1-800-667-2525		
Bradford (416) 775-6763	<b>224-5211</b>	Some restrictions apply	
Grimsby (416) 946-3301		Ont. Reg. 01495098	



## The French need to hear a respectable Gospel, says evangelist

**Bert Witvoet**

"It is safe to say that, with some exceptions, Calvinistic or Calvinian theology and piety have not been influential in the country of John Calvin's birth," says Aaron Kayayan. Kayayan is the director of the French-broadcast program of the Back to God Hour, a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church of North America.

According to Kayayan, there are between 800,000 to two million Protestants in France, depending on the meaning one gives to the term "Protestant." Only a few of these Protestants are truly Reformed.

This picture is given further significance by the fact that France has a total population of 57 million, 40 million of whom claim to have been baptized Roman Catholic, but fewer than four million of whom attend mass.

### Solid preaching

"Broadly speaking, since the 17th century French Protestantism has divided into two theological and spiritual streams," says Kayayan: "the liberal stream and the so-called evangelical stream. The latter has been mostly influenced by pietism and revivalism, imported either from Germany or, in its worst version, from Anglo-Saxon movements."

Whatever attempts have been made in the past to reintroduce and popularize Reformed thought have been neutralized by a flood of charismatic elements, opposed

without exception to Reformed theology, says Kayayan.

Photo: Pan American World Airways



Kayayan sees hope only in reviving a biblical faith through solid preaching of the Word of God, with its ethical implications and a worldview worthy of the name "Reformed."

The Back to God Hour provides such preaching and world-and-life view through its daily and weekly broadcasts in French, says Kayayan. Powerful radio stations cover both Europe and several countries in Africa.

### Fast-food Gospel

Kayayan laments the "inundation" of foreign evangelists

who use inadequate theological means, methods that are inappropriate to a French mentality and culture. These have done more harm than good, he believes.

He quotes a French young Christian who wrote that their "high-tech evangelism through mass meetings, a salvation in three minutes, in four lessons, in five spiritual truths...with the whole heavenly blessings at the end of the month, remind us more or less of a fast-food policy.

"When the mass media disbands," says Kayayan, "the

message evaporates too, leaving not the slightest trace behind. Such deceptions are both an insult to intelligence and a dishonour to the Gospel."

Kayayan believes that rather than lament that the French are so unreceptive to the Gospel, Christians have to remedy and refuse a shallow communication of the Gospel.

"We strive, though in a limited way, to express the 'whole counsel' of God" says Kayayan, "and proclaim the Gospel so that we may bring on this soil, too, 'all thoughts captive to Christ.'"

## Dutch church will remain in Reformed Ecumenical Council

**Marian Van Til, with REC files**

KAMPEN, Netherlands — The general synod of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands (Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland or GKN) has decided that the church will not pull out of the Reformed Ecumenical Council

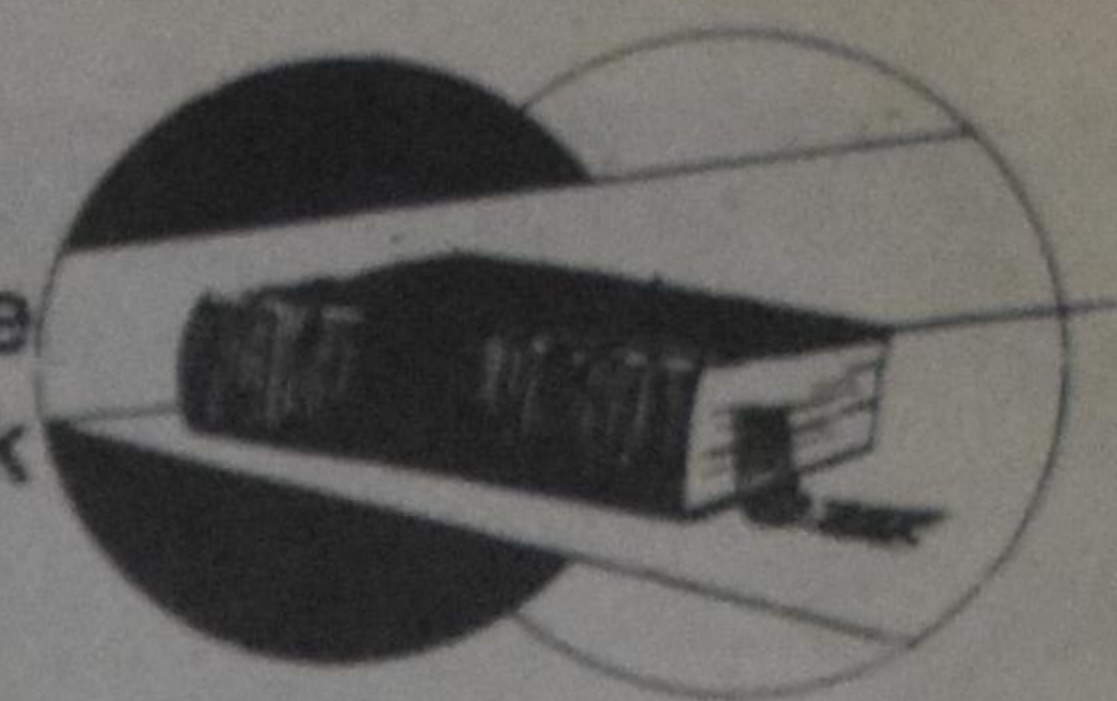
It considered doing so in response to attempts to create a "suspended membership" category earlier this year in Athens at the quadrennial REC meeting.

In Athens, the Dutch church was at the centre of debate on the proposal because of its theological positions on issues

such as homosexuality and how to read Scripture.

The GKN did place a condition on itself regarding its REC membership. If the REC adopts such a proposal in the future the GKN will withdraw.

**Bible  
Notebook**  
Al Wolters



## Partners of the Deity

*"He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter 1:4, RSV)*

The last phrase in this verse, "partakers of the divine nature," has been a problem for many biblical interpreters, because it seems to suggest that human beings can actually become divine. This seems to wipe out the distinction between creature and Creator, and thus to conflict with the rest of biblical teaching on the relationship between human beings and God. It is true that the Greek Orthodox tradition speaks quite frankly of the *theosis* or divinization of believers, using this text as biblical support, but other Christians, especially Protestants, have always felt uncomfortable with such language. Instead, they have said that "the divine nature" here refers to God's holiness, not his essential being, or (in the case of some liberal Protestants) they have taken the further step of declaring the verse unbiblical.

For years, this has been a verse that bothered me. I remember reading, as a graduate student in the Netherlands in the 1960s, the dissertation of H.M. Kuitert, in which he has a separate section on this problematic verse, and toys with the idea that it does not really belong to authentic biblical teaching. This seemed to me like a highly unsatisfactory way of dealing with the difficulty, but I didn't find the traditional Protestant exegesis very convincing either.

### Covenantal Partnership

Then, about four years ago, I found the solution. I discovered that the Greek words usually translated "partakers" and "nature" could be understood in quite a different way. The word *koinonoi*, although it does mean "partakers" occasionally, much more frequently means "partners" in the Greek of the New Testament. And the word *physis* although it can mean "nature," has many other meanings as well, including "being" in the sense of "entity" or individual reality. In other words, it is possible to read 2 Peter 1:4 as referring not to "partakers of the divine nature," but rather to "partners of the divine being," or simply as "partners of the Deity." Furthermore, this interpretation could be supported by the Greek usage of Philo and Josephus, two well-known Jewish writers of the time, and fit in well with the kind of style that was used in 2 Peter elsewhere. It also fit in well with the Jewish habit of referring to God in an indirect way.

On this reading of our text it is no longer necessary to suppose that the Bible speaks of the divinization of human beings, or that 2 Peter 1:4 is somehow alien to the rest of the New Testament.

Instead, it reinforces the pervasive biblical emphasis on the covenantal partnership which exists between God and his people. The wonderful promises of the gospel are not that we will become divine, but that we will be partners with God in the covenant.

I was so taken with my exegetical discovery that I decided to use it as the subject of my inaugural lecture at Redeemer College, which I delivered on March 10, 1989. This inaugural lecture was subsequently published in *Calvin Theological Journal* 25 (1990), pp. 28-44, and is now also available as a separate brochure from Redeemer College.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.



## Feature

# A change of heart

## Jane Wilson

It was a hot Texas day as my husband and I sat eating lunch. Suddenly I gushed, "Rev. McMullen gave me an exciting Bible verse this morning. I want to show you." I hurriedly thumbed through my Bible to find Matthew 21:22. Because of our family situation I was attending counselling with a Christian counsellor.

"That's okay for you," Steve said as he brushed his hand across his balding forehead. "I don't need Bible study. I go to church on Sunday and I stay out of bars. I don't want to be too religious."

My spirits sank as I felt as lonely as the whirring sound of the air conditioner stirring up cool air.

"But this Bible verse says that whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive if you have faith. I want my prayers answered!"

"Why don't you get the hell out?" yelled Steve. "I'm sick and tired of your religion. I'm tired of you trying to change me."

Steve was a good man. He worked hard to provide for our family, sometimes working at two jobs. His behaviour was exemplary and he attended church services on Sunday mornings. Yet much was missing in a spiritual sense in our marriage. I longed to pray with him, to study and discuss Scripture, and to just talk about Jesus. I longed for my three children to hear him pray.

When our children were small I tried having devotions in the evenings. But Steve did not want the time to interfere with his reading or television watching and he was tired because of a hard day's work. I

tried teaching our children alone. My two daughters were now married and lived in another town. My 16-year-old son was showing signs of drug abuse. I was devastated. I needed prayer. I needed faith. I needed the support of my husband.

To survive, I reached out to God. In addition to counselling, I joined a Bible study group from our church. We met on Thursday nights, taking turns in our homes. The group members — men and women —

were understanding and supportive.

## 'If you don't like it, leave'

Throughout our 28 years of married life, when angered, Steve would settle disagreements with the statement that if I didn't like something, I could leave. I knew Ephesians 5:22 and wanted to live up to it. What did it actually mean that a wife is subject to her husband as to the Lord? Today I had a choice to make.

Thoughts went through my mind. "I'm a wife, but my soul belongs to God. I can no longer keep quiet about him."

"I cannot turn back," I told Steve. "I can never be the person I used to be. I will move my clothes into the other bedroom and you can do whatever you choose."

We lived in separate bedrooms for three days, coming and going without telling the other. We ate meals in silence. I was not afraid. I was at peace. I did what I felt I needed to do.

"Come back to our room," Steve told me on the third day. "I do not want to live apart."

"Our marriage must change. I cannot continue to hear the invitation to leave every time we disagree." Steve promised to never say that again.

"It's my turn to have Bible study tonight," I told Steve in late afternoon. "Will you come to the den for refreshments after we finish? Just to meet the people and visit a while."

He came and was impressed with the joy and love shown there. The men eagerly spoke of love for their families. Though we'd attended church with these people, Steve had never become acquainted with them.

"Come and join us next week," was their invitation on leaving, and Steve promised he would.

There were no words between us that week about Bible study — yet I had a quiet knowledge

within that things would never be the same.

## Quiet Christian

Five years passed and things have never been the same. We go to Bible study every Thursday night with the same Christian people. After a few months, Steve began to pray aloud in the prayer circle.

"His prayers are innocent, sincere, almost child-like," said Bill, one of the members, to me one night.

"Yes. It's amazing how comfortable he feels talking with our Lord."

Though Steve does not talk about what the Lord has done in his life, he continues to pray and attend Bible study and Sunday School as well as church. Best of all, we pray together in bed each morning on awakening and life is much better.

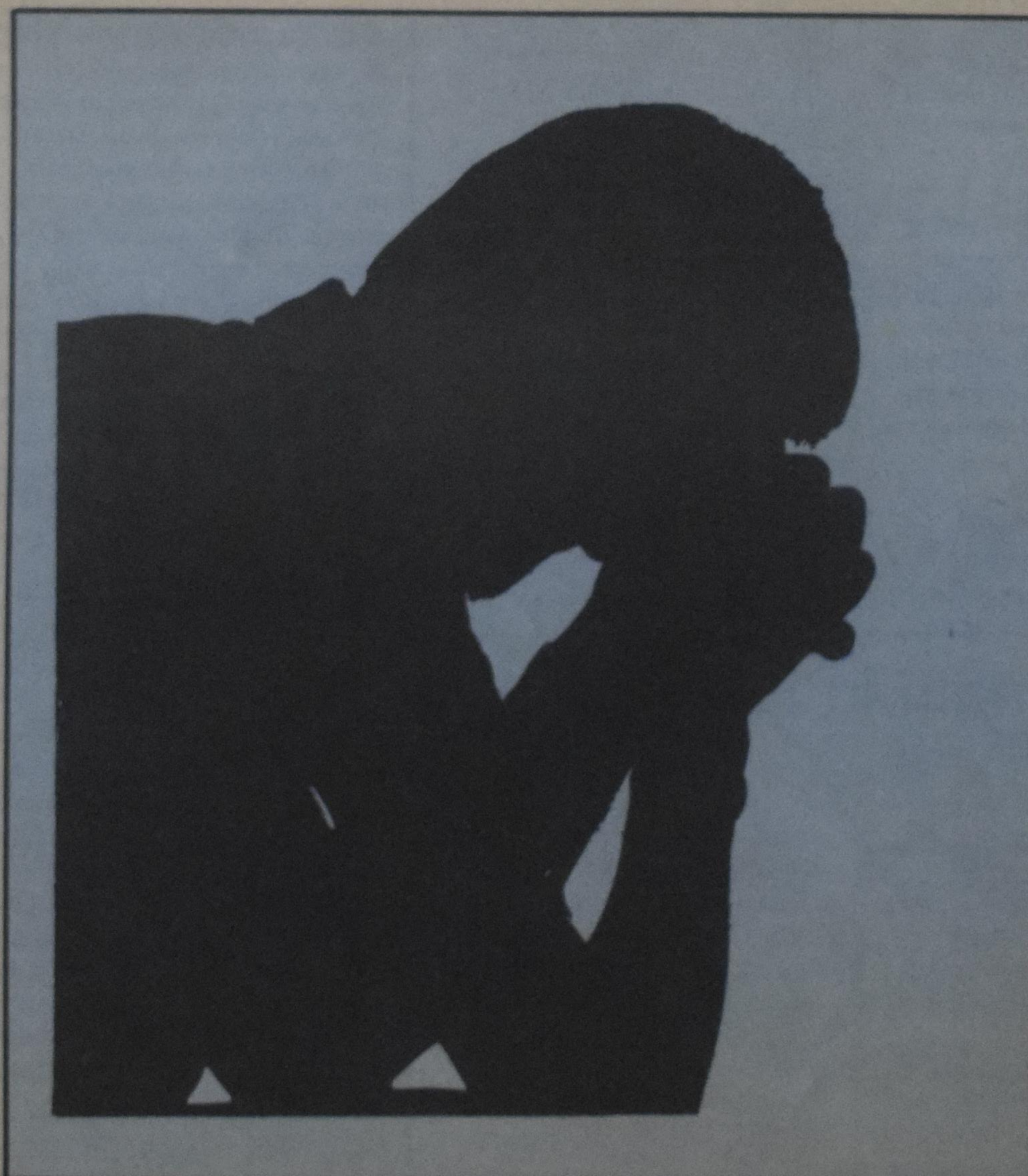
Our married daughters enjoy coming home for visits now that there is a changed atmosphere. Recently, one said to me, "I've always loved you, but I *like* you much better now."

Brad, our son, lives away from home and continues to abuse alcohol and drugs, despite the fact that he has been through treatment programs twice. For this we are sad, but to be able to pray together about the situation has sustained us. God has not removed the pain nor healed Brad, but we believe that somehow, someday, Brad will give his life to Christ. At times, when I despair, it is Steve who says, "Remember in whom you have faith."

These five years have been a learning time for me also. In 1 Peter 3 we are told to have a gentle and quiet spirit, that husbands will be won by the conduct of their wives. I knew I could never be critical of the way Steve prayed, or of his asking strange questions about the Bible. He was learning and so was I.

Though there were many years when we were not close spiritually, what we are sharing now is very special. I praise God for doing a mighty work in our lives!

*Jane Wilson is a pseudonym for a writer who lives in Waco, Texas.*





## Children's Page

# Who's the best?

(based on 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31)

## Ron Dube

One day an argument erupted between five fingers. The question that kept the little group occupied was this: "Who is most important and best qualified to lead the others?"

Thumb, who had hitchhiked his way around the world, considered himself quite knowledgeable in worldly matters. He said he would make an extraordinarily good leader. He expected thumbs up from the others.

Index was quick to point out that Thumb wasn't really a finger and should not be allowed to lead the group. Index, who was known to quickly point out the wrongs of others, felt he was a superior candidate for the job. After all, he knew what was right.

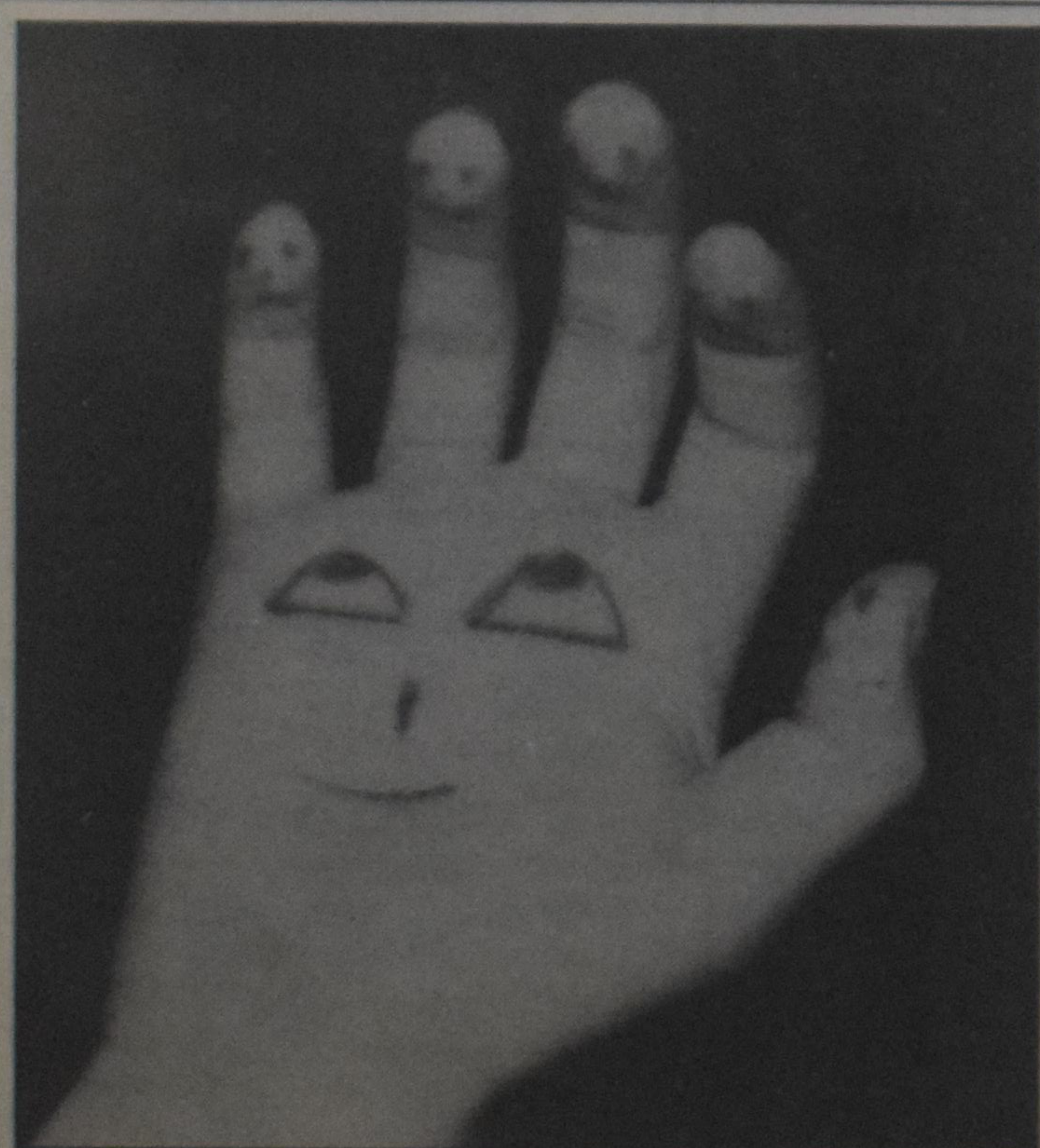
Middle, who had a reputation for being rude, and would

often make obscene gestures toward others, reminded everyone that he was the biggest and that he had the necessary power to lead. Anyway, he didn't care what the others thought.

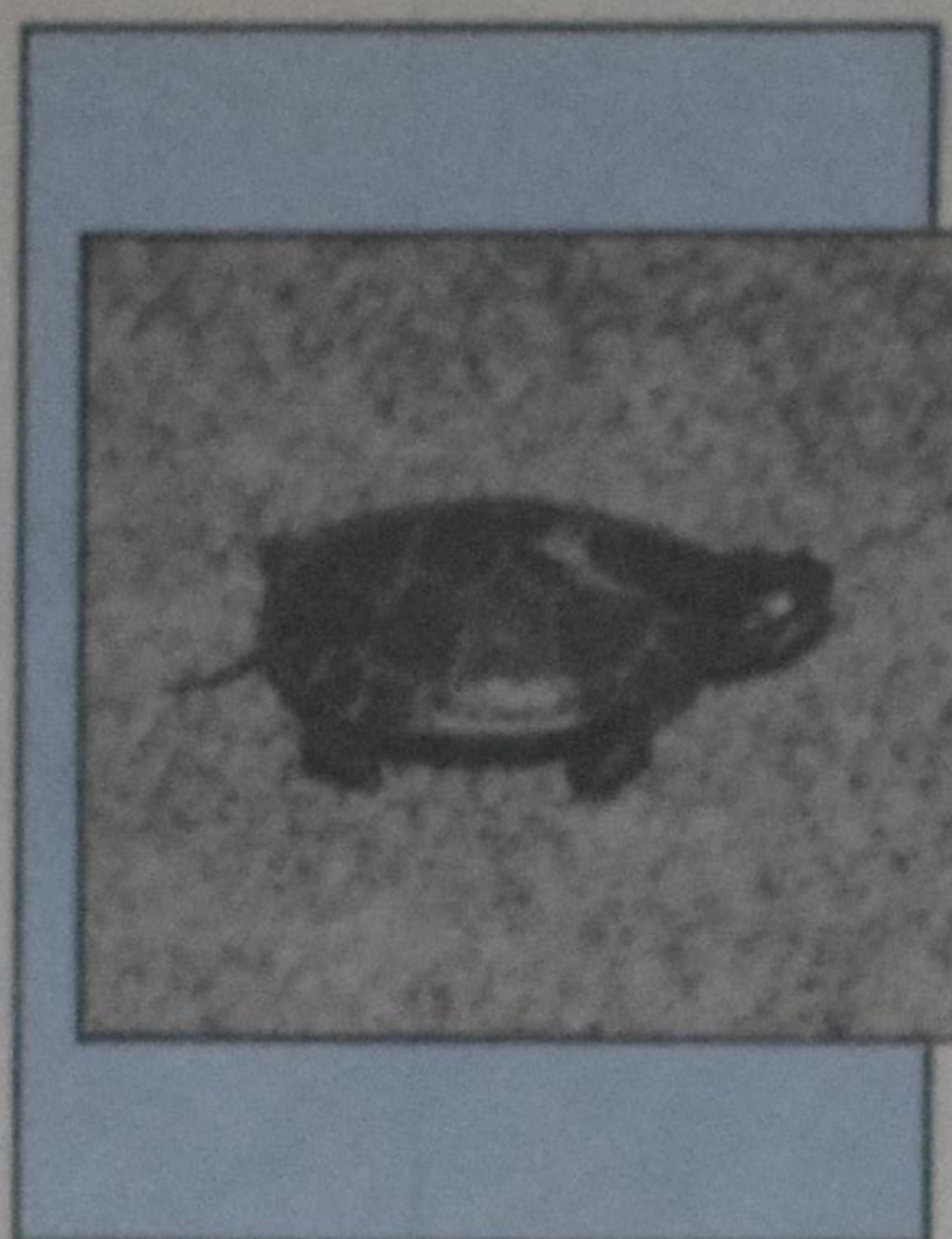
Ring, who always dressed in gold adorned with fine jewels, cashed in on the opportunity to talk about his good business sense and his ability to handle financial matters. His assets proved that, he said. He suggested that the other fingers invest in his ability to strike it rich.

But Pinky, who was very shy and usually had little to say, wondered if he could ask a question. Did anyone still believe in the hand? is what he wanted to know.

*Ron Dube is a pastor and prisoner in Kingston, Ont.*



*Photo: Marian Van Til*  
This hand belongs to seven-year-old Jonathan Der Nederlanden from St. Catharines, Ont.

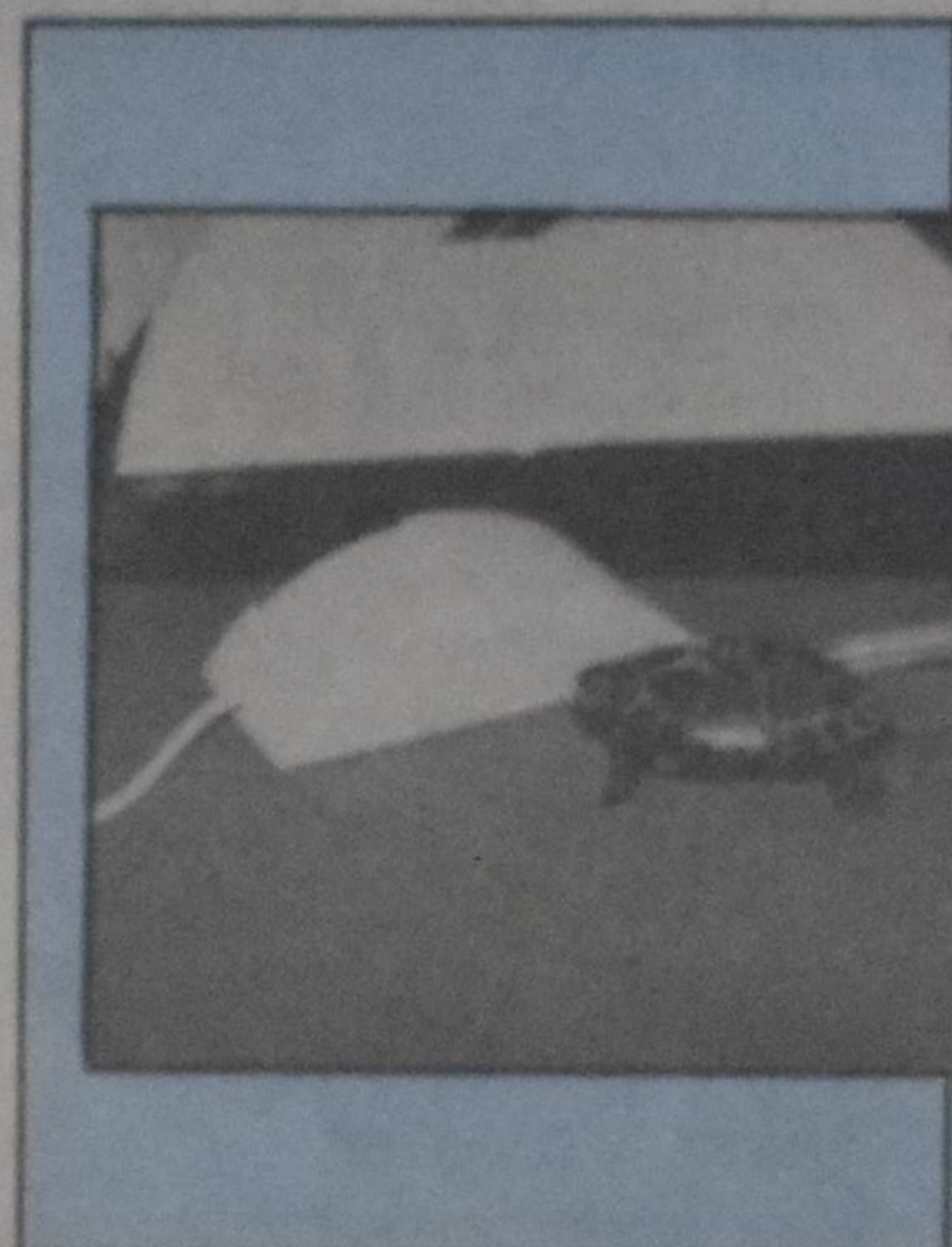


## Bert Witvoet

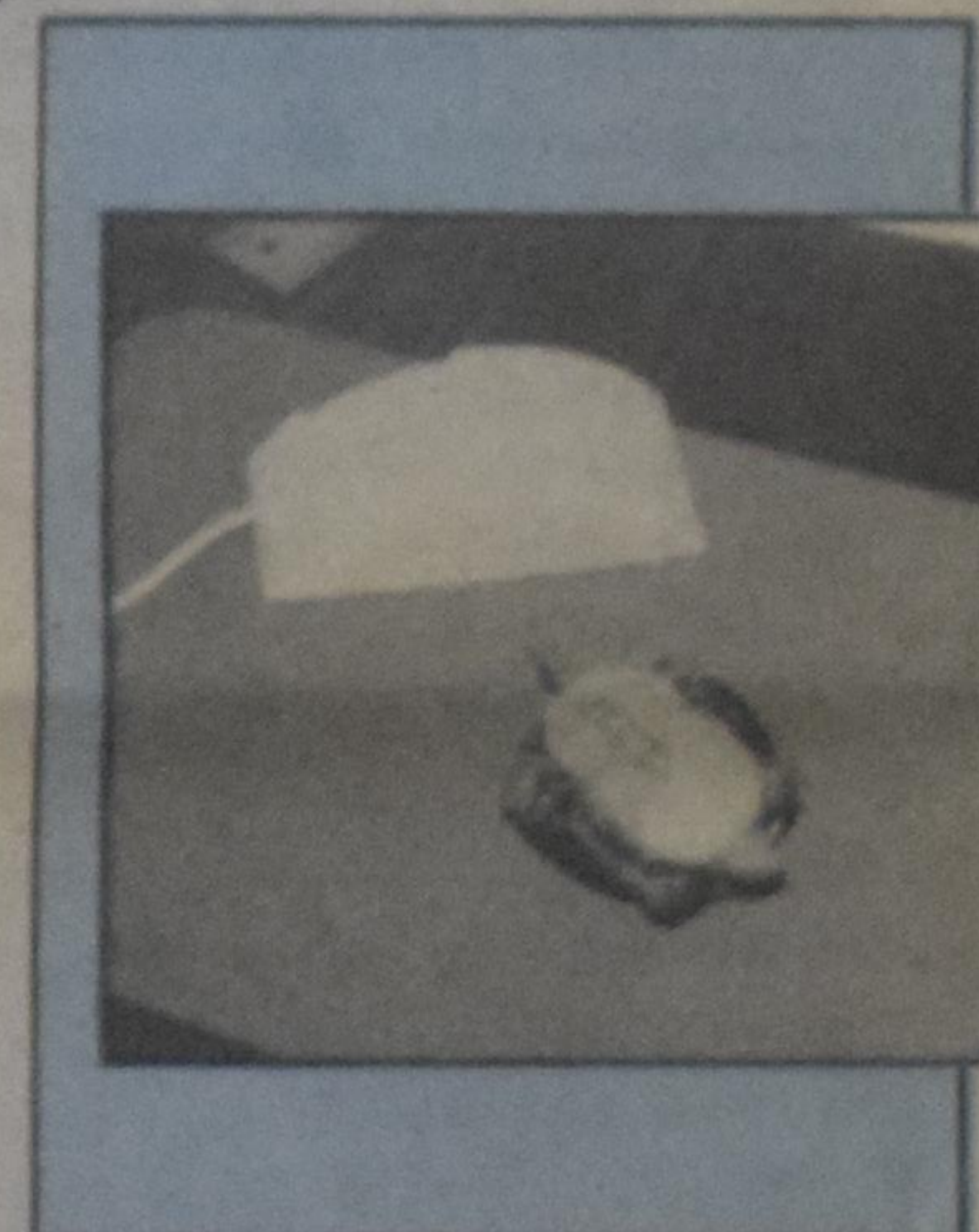
We had a visitor in our office the other day — a young snapping turtle about four inches long. He (or she? — it's hard to tell with turtles) came in through the back door and scampered over the rug as if he were a long distance runner. Of course, we people who work all day with words and computers thoroughly enjoyed this encounter with a little creature from the wild.

One of us lifted the small turtle onto one of the desks to show off to her our latest computer. We've gone desktop publishing, you know. Well, young Snappy immediately went for the "mouse" (whose gender is also unknown!) A strange mouse, this one. It has a tail and all that, but it doesn't move (not on its own, anyway).

# Young Snappy dropped by



We did, and Snappy took off, over the cord that runs to the calculator, past the big mailing machine that sends *Christian Courier* all over the country, through the big doors that lead to the outside parking lot. We waved goodbye as Snappy flipped over a curb onto the grass, into a little pond. What a story she will have to tell her playmates!



Young Snappy thought the mouse was another turtle hiding underneath a shell.

Snappy tried to get the mouse's attention but nothing happened. Finally, Snappy rolled over on her back. Still the mouse did not stir. Strange, don't you think? Let's face it, Snappy beats our mouse by a country mile when it comes to movement, beauty and unpredictability. Discouraged, Snappy asked if we could turn her over again and place her on the rug.

Ouch, my finger still hurts. Guess who bit me?

# The Whale

O wouldn't you like to be a whale

and sail serenely by,  
An eighty-foot whale from  
your tip to your tail

And a tiny, briny eye?  
Wouldn't you like to wallow  
Where nobody says "Come  
out!"

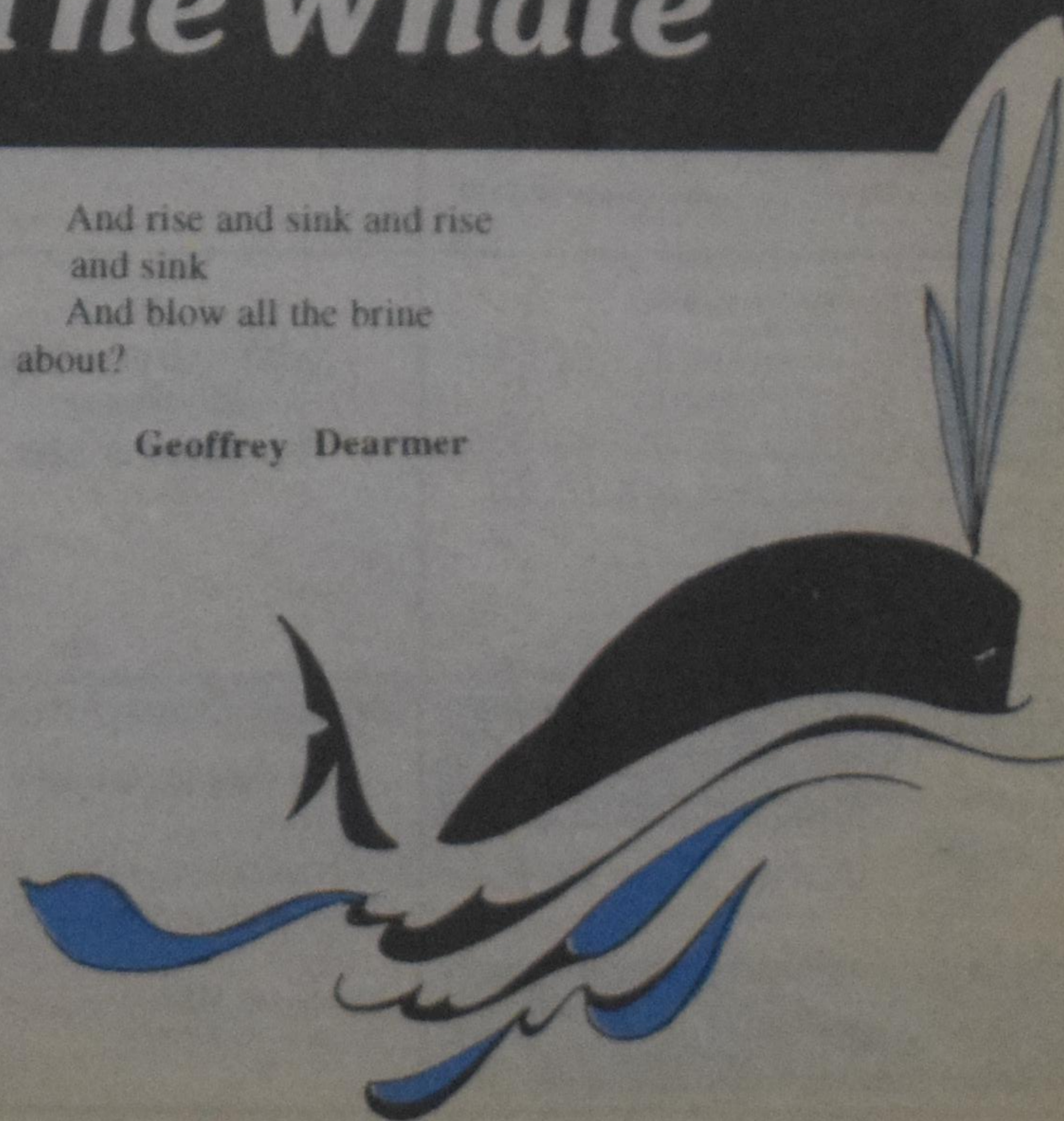
Wouldn't you love to swallow  
And blow all the brine  
about?

Wouldn't you like to be always  
clean  
But never have to wash, I mean,  
And wouldn't you love to  
spout

O yes, — just — think —  
A feather of spray as you  
sail away

And rise and sink and rise  
and sink  
And blow all the brine  
about?

Geoffrey Dearmer





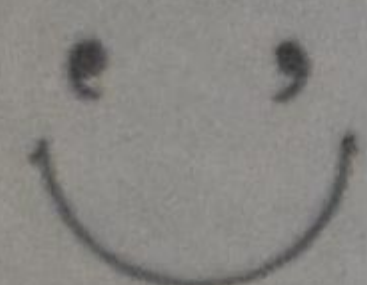
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Hmm....

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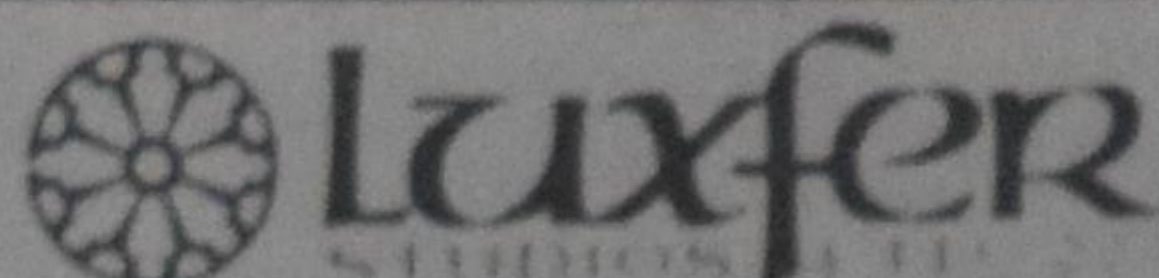
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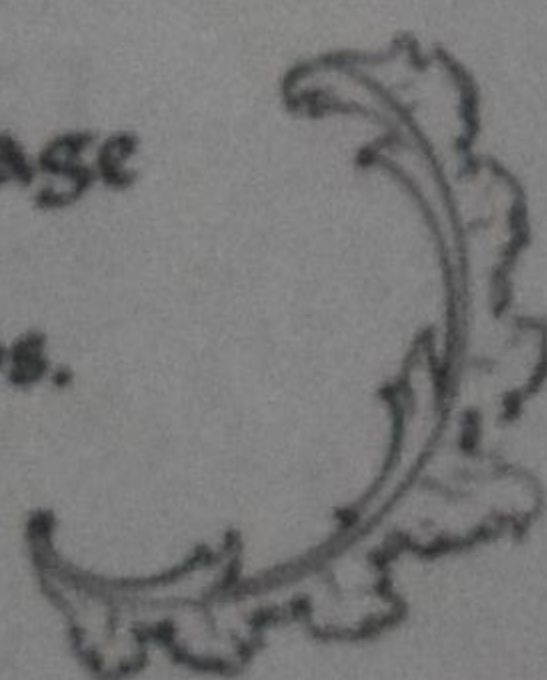


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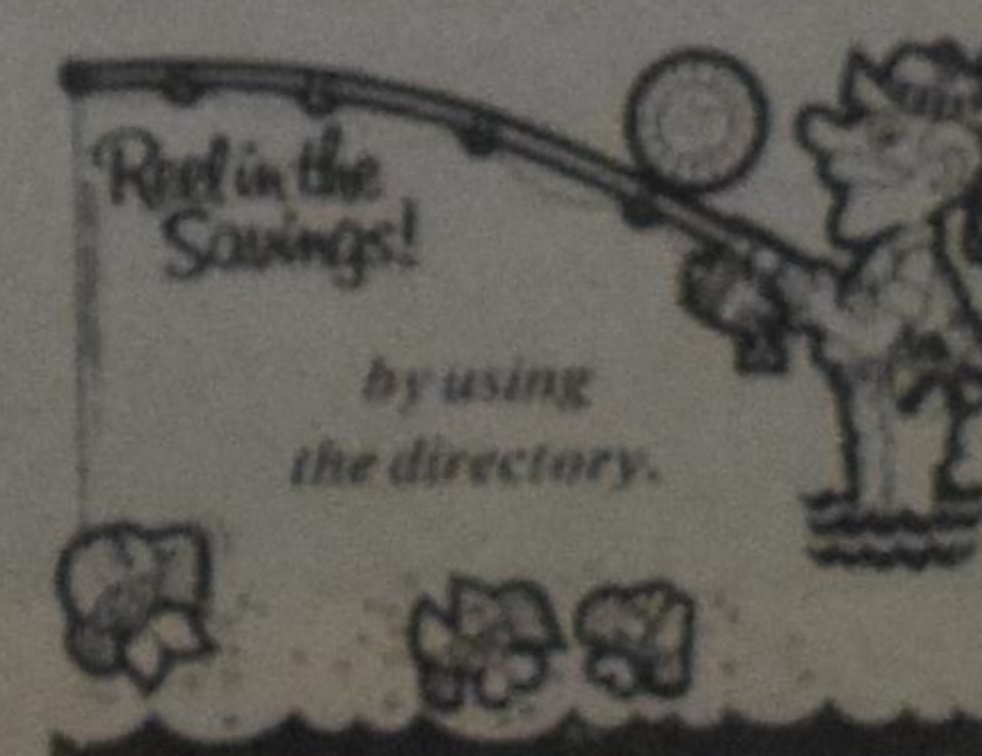


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## Family

small  
talk

Alice Los

Life's fleeting  
pages

I keep a diary. Nothing fancy, mind you. No deep thoughts or secret sentiments are entrusted to its pages. I only record the prosaic facts of everyday living. I've done it for years and have found it useful.

It settles many a question or doubt: When was it that we made that trip to the East coast? (Was that three years ago already? Can't be!) When did we last see Auntie Myrtle? My diary has it black on white: "Oct. 13: Saw Auntie Myrtle this afternoon. She looked quite frail but talked a mile a minute anyway. She's always such fun to listen to! Picked up a bushel of apples on the way back. Late supper...."

## Memories resurface

Now if a factual diary like mine settles any doubt about dates and events, it also brings back memories. One day I may idly flip the pages of the spiral-bound notebook which contains the entries of some 10 years ago, and a name will leap out at me.

That name may make me smile or frown as I remember what this man or woman did or stood for and I may be surprised how the passing of time has (or has not) affected the relevance of a specific episode.

I may also find how busy I've been with household chores: "Cleaned the basement today. Back-breaking job!" Let's see, when was this? The date will tell me what house our family lived in at the time and I'll remember the way we were — easily cause for half an hour's reverie.

Another note in the same book may have me attend Ladies' Society, and I'll recall the church of those days, its basement and the room allotted to us women. I see them all around the characteristic shoved-together tables, perched on uncomfortable chairs, faces intent on solving a difficult question. My sisters in Christ!

## Camaraderie past and future

Another part of the diary will remind me of school board meetings and I'll relish the memory of collective hard work and the sense of camaraderie among the group of dedicated men and women. And I'll be grateful again for some knowledge and insight gained in those years, useful to this day.

Last week I took a brand-new notebook again. In my best handwriting I wrote *Anno Domini 1993* on its cover.

Will I laugh or cry when I flip its pages some years hence? More acutely, will I even be allowed an entry on December 31?

God, who loves me, knows. What better assurance do I need as I proceed from page to fleeting page? And so, may every "prosaic fact," all ordinary occurrences in all God's family, reflect the trust and joy and praise which his name kindles in all his children.

*Alice Los lives in Inkerman, Ont.*

Letters from Moscow  
2

## Ray and Wilma Schraa

It was cloudy and extremely foggy a day after our own arrival in Russia when the KLM flight from Amsterdam approached Moscow's international airport. On board were nine more members of our team, and Rev. Tom De Vries, the Eastern Europe and Russia director of Christian Reformed World Missions. The pilot had considered diverting the flight to Minsk, but did get clearance and brought the plane in safely.

Six weeks earlier we had said goodbye to each other after our month-long training session in Grand Rapids, Mich. It was a delight to see the whole team together and to get reacquainted.

Each couple was assigned to one of the six military academies in Moscow. The one reserved for us was the Zhukovsky Air Force Engineering Academy. We were taken there by military car accompanied by an army major. We were somewhat apprehensive about what the next few hours would bring.

The academy uses Petrovsky Palace as its headquarters. The palace features ancient Russian architecture and was built by Matvei Kazakov at the end of the 18th century. The palace was used by the czars as well as by Napoleon in 1812 when Moscow burned. We were led on a tour by the curator. He also showed us the Air Force Museum and explained in detail the feats of several Russian pilots and astronauts.

## Nervous meeting

A meeting had been arranged with six high ranking officers. With the help of an interpreter we introduced ourselves. Several questions were fired at us: Why have you come to Moscow? Why have you "chosen" this academy?

What are your plans? What do you wish to see?

The atmosphere was somewhat tense but we answered the best we knew how. The thing that "broke the ice" was Ray's story of his parachute jump last year. They were amazed and, like us, much more relaxed after that.

Lunch with a colonel and the interpreter ended the morning session. In the afternoon we met with Maria, the head of the language department, and eight Russian teachers. These women teach English so that cadets and post-graduate students are able to read and translate technical foreign papers. We were informed that many have difficulty using conversational day-to-day English. Our task would be to teach that aspect of the language.

The atmosphere was pleasant as we shared information about our background and church affiliation. As well, we mentioned how it had happened that we had volunteered for this project, and we assured the women of our help and interest.

We now felt at ease about our undertaking and at once made friends with Natasha, one of the teachers. She spoke English fluently and was eager to help us in whatever way possible.

"Make sure," she said, "that you give me a call tonight and tell me if you need anything. I will help you."

What an answer to prayer our meeting here was! It was an exciting day. The Lord has prepared the way for us and we are grateful.

*The Schraas are part of a team designated by Christian Reformed World Missions to teach English and Bible to Russian army officers.*

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AKRON, Pennsylvania (MCC) — *African Tales*, a new 23-minute Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) video for primary grades, uses paintings and sound effects to tell three African fables. The stories told are: "Banana Thieves," "The Spider and the Antelope," and "The Boastful Crocodile." The video also looks at Zaire through a child's eyes.

Interspersed with the stories, Lulama Kunene, a person from South Africa, talks with a group of children about life in Africa.

One viewer said about *African Tales*, "The sound effects, paintings and organization of this video are really excellent. Our three-year-old loves it; a real testimony."

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## Brouwer/Books

# Global beauties and beasts

*The Coming Century of Commonism: The Beauty and the Beast of Global Governance*, by Philip C. Bom. Virginia Beach, Va.: Policy Books, Inc., 1992. ISBN 0-9632148-0-2. Softcover, 393 pp., \$15.95. Reviewed by Justin D. Cooper, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

The dramatic international events of the past two years have again raised questions about the future direction of world politics. Philip Bom's *The Coming Century of Commonism* is a timely addition to the literature on this topic. In it he traces the background and impact of "commonism," the term he has coined for a new global political spirituality which emphasizes common (environmental) survival, common security and a common future.

Bom, who is a political science professor at Regent University in Virginia, sets out to show that, for all its promises of a better future, "commonism's" true pedigree is to be found in Lenin's revolutionary socialist democracy, as recycled by Gorbachev, and will lead to oppressive gover-

nance on a global scale. The title of the book is in fact a take-off on Gorbachev's work, *The Coming Century of Peace*, which Bom attacks as an example of masquerading Leninism that the West should be more wary of, in spite of the collapse of the U.S.S.R.

## Copious documentation

After introducing his thesis, Bom develops it in succeeding chapters on a variety of international issues and current events. The book concludes with an analysis of the false spirituality which undergirds "commonism," a discussion of the support which it has received in some quarters of the Christian church, and a presentation of Bom's Christianly based alternative, "An Old Spirit for a New Global Order."

The book is well-documented, as evidenced by copious quotes and detailed discussion of events through which the author unfolds his case. The numerous references and careful detail are undoubtedly meant to indicate that we have to take "commonism"

seriously; however, this contributes to a style which can become laborious and distracting.

The book also has a polemical tone and at times reads more like an exposé than a systematic analysis of a position. Also striking is the author's propensity for using word plays and catchy phrases, as evident in the subtitle of the book.

## Helpful, but too one-sided

Whether or not one agrees with Bom's analysis of the roots of "commonism," he is correct to point out its humanistic basis and its simplistic holism. His analysis of the reports to the United Nations by the Brandt, MacBride and Brundtland commissions is particularly helpful in this regard. It is unfortunate, however, that he identifies any trend toward multilateral international institutions with the new spirit of "commonism."

We are left with a rather one-sided account which upholds a free society, free market and national sovereignty without grappling seriously with the legitimate role which international institutions can play in maintaining a just international order among states whose territorial character may limit their capacity to administer justice at the international level.

In summary, *The Coming Century of Commonism* is a worthwhile book which calls attention to a new global spirituality that is coming into vogue.

Anyone interested in the direction of current and future world politics will benefit from the author's analysis, which shows that "commonism" is another humanist counterfeit that should not be swallowed whole, despite its globalist appeal. However, the book would be strengthened if the influence of this misguided spirit were more clearly delimited and the legitimate need for international order and justice more fully recognized.



## Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

## Two-part invention

"Praise the Lord from the heavens...praise the Lord from the earth" (Psalm 148: 1,7).

Do you know what a "two-part invention" is? Bach wrote a number of them. Composers might call Psalm 148 a two-part invention because it's formed as a short musical piece with two related themes that interweave into a single whole.

Author Madeleine L'Engle used that term when she wrote a book about her marriages. She loved her first husband immensely, but then he died horribly of cancer. Beyond her wildest hopes she found love again, and a second marriage ensued. So her life became a "two-part invention" of love.

Creation itself is a two-part invention, sings the psalmist. The glory of God is shouted in the heavens. Then it's resounded by the creatures of earth. And the music they make together is a refrain that wafts to fill the contours of time and eternity, space and infinity.

## Day and night

George MacDonald once told the tale called "The Day Boy and the Night Girl." It was really a two-part invention of love and praise. The girl was raised in a dark cave by a witch and was never allowed to see the light of day. The boy, on the other hand, was raised by the same witch to live and breathe and romp during the daylight. Never was he allowed to sleep during the day. Never was he put into dark spaces. Even when he went to his bed at night, the event took place before the sun was down and the room was brightly lit by candles and torches.

So, says MacDonald, these two roamed their separate worlds. The Night Girl managed to find her way out of the cave, but only during nocturnal darkness. And the Day Boy spread his flights of fancy further abroad, always sure to be home before sunset.

Of course, as you can guess, destiny would draw this pair together. On one day's hunt the Day Boy strayed too far and too late to avoid the onset of twilight. Falling asleep in bewilderment at the growing gloom, he is later awakened by the Night Girl searching for friends.

"You are a creature of the darkness and love the night," he told her reproachfully.

"I may be a creature of the darkness," she replied, "but I do not love the night. I love the day — with all my heart...."

## A perfect match

But she never had a guide to the light, nor he a teacher of the night. So they become fast friends, playing out the same youthful delight on either side of dawn and dusk.

And when they came to marry, this was the Day Boy's prayer: "She has got to teach me to be a brave man in the dark, and I have got to look after her until she can bear the heat of the sun and he helps her to see instead of blinding her."

Perhaps the marriage of heaven and earth is something like that. I have a feeling that on the day of that ceremony, portrayed in festive terms in the book of Revelation, Psalm 148 might be a fitting selection for the choir to sing.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ont.

## Olympic outreach in Spain far from finished

BARCELONA, Spain (EP) Teams from missionary groups and churches all over the world have travelled to Spain during the past six months as the country celebrated a string of events putting it in the international spotlight.

Major evangelism campaigns were mounted at the summer Olympics in Barcelona, and at the World Expo in Seville.

"Seville has changed," says Hans Barnreuther, Youth With A Mission (YWAM) director in the city and a member of the pavilion's organizing group. "The spiritual climate is different; you can talk with people about God out on the streets now and they don't have that fear of 'Protestants' that they did in the past."

The busy summer of missionary activity — a sort of Gospel fiesta — is being followed by an equally typical Spanish time of *siesta*, with little apparently happening. Christians around the world should continue to pray for the country, says Barnreuther.

The Spanish Parliament has approved cooperation between the government and Spanish Protestants in nations long dominated by Roman Catholicism. The agreement recognizes Protestantism in that society and gives it the same legal status as Catholicism. Protestants can now establish schools, serve as military chaplains, and receive tax exemptions for contributions to churches.



## Advice



## Peter and Marja are



### Dear P & M:

*I need some help in finding out exactly what it means to be "Reformed." I've been in the Reformed faith all my life but wonder whether or not I am Reformed in my thinking. I am questioning whether I belong in the CRC.*

*An elder in my church told me that Reformed people don't take the Bible literally. He said that the working of the Holy Spirit as it was in the Bible isn't like this today. Well I do take the Bible literally, word for word, and I do feel that the Holy Spirit of God is the same today as yesterday. I am spirit-filled and speak in tongues. I find many of the people in my congregation go as far as John 3:16 in their faith and forget the daily sanctification process. I believe that the best way to serve God is to love all the people God puts in my life. Even the unlovely. I am different in my walk with the Lord than others, and they think I am just emotional or "going through a phase."*

*After a worship service my peers gossip or discuss anything but the things of the Lord. Worship seems to be a habit or tradition. Personal prayer and daily devotions are not a priority with most. Yet I see so many hurting people in my church who need prayer and the Word. Yes, I do pray for them, but think how much more powerful it would be if we all prayed for each other.*

*I don't come in judgment against anyone but I have a real burden on my heart for my congregation. My pastor is terribly overworked and the elders have jobs and families too. If more capable people in my church ministered to each other we could become more spiritual in our lives. If my viewpoint became generally known I would be mocked. This is how it is in my church. I have spoken privately with good people in my church and they understand what I'm saying but are unable to move to change the status quo — that tradition thing again.*

*Many have left my church in the last year because they were unhappy. I can understand this, though this is not my aim. I am trying to be spiritually fed in my church but I am afraid that the day will come when I will reluctantly leave. This is the first time I have admitted this to myself. I feel the need to stay for the others. If everyone leaves what will become of the ones who stay? My trust is in the Lord, that he will lead and guide me.*

*So I guess what I want to know is what Reformed is, and do I fit into that mold. And will you please suggest some books that are straightforward and easy to understand on what it means to be Reformed?*

*I know there are many good CRCs, many good Christian people in the denomination who are spirit-filled. I just happen to be in an area where there is only one CRC and it comes as it comes; no church shopping available here.*

*By the way, I just received an unsolicited copy of Reformed Witness. I shuddered as I read it and tore it in two before I threw it in the garbage. If this is what Reformed means then I'm afraid that it's not for me. All that arguing and fighting is not right, according to what the Bible teaches us. What happened to child-like faith and loving each other?*

*Thanks for any help you can give me.*

*God bless you BIG!*

### Dear 'Am I Reformed?'

You're not just going through an emotional phase. You're on fire for the Lord; you're concerned for the spiritual well-being of your church family. If that's not Reformed, we don't know what is! How sad that others would criticize you for being different in exactly the way Jesus calls and moves us to be.

We're glad that you have not left your church. But you need to feel supported, otherwise your lack of belonging and acceptance will eventually lead to your leaving. Many vibrant Christians have left their home churches out of frustration as their attempts to revitalize congregational life were met with resistance. The truth is that change is rarely welcomed and tradition is quickly threatened. Any Reformer who is willing to challenge the status quo must also be willing to pay a personal price for stirring up the people of God.

So that you feel supported, gather some of those "good people" who understand you and form a small study and prayer group. A small fellowship where you can grow spiritually and freely express your faith and love for the Lord will be really beneficial for you and your friends. Then use the joy and strength which will be nurtured there to encourage others in your congregation, including your over-worked pastor.

The word "Reformed" has a lot of baggage these days. Your elder and your unsolicited copy of the *Reformed Witness* represent two extreme positions which make us cringe. Reformed Christians SHOULD take the Bible literally and they SHOULDN'T spend their time arguing and fighting over theological issues.

The best definition of what it means to be Reformed revolves around the main principles of the Reformation. Luther, Calvin and Zwingli rallied around three themes. Grace alone! Faith alone! Scripture alone! We may see some things differently even when we look at the same Bible passage. Taking the Bible literally does not preclude different interpretations and emphases. But the Reformed Christian never forgets that God's most important activity is his gracious love for sinners; that humanity's most important activity is belief in Jesus Christ; and that the most reliable source of information about the issues of life, death and salvation is the Bible.

Since you are hesitant about your denomination's biblical vitality, it may benefit you to order some of the materials put out by CRC Publications. Ask your pastor for his copy of the '92/'93 Catalogue they put out and be amazed at the resources available to you. As devotional reading we would especially recommend Donald Postema's *Space for God* and Cornelius Plantinga's *Beyond Doubt*. We also encourage you to get the study version of *Our World Belongs to God*, the CRC's new contemporary testimony. It beautifully articulates the Reformed faith for the '90s.

God bless you REALLY BIG!

**Write to: P&M**  
c/o Christian Courier  
4-261 Martindale Road  
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.



## Classifieds

Classified Rates	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Obituaries	
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	<p><b>Birthdays</b></p> <p>"Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Ps. 103: 1, 2).</p> <p>It will be our beloved Mom and Grandma's 90th birthday on Jan. 18, 1993, the Lord willing.</p> <p>Come and celebrate with us God's goodness and abiding faithfulness to</p> <p><b>MARIA GUILLAUME</b></p> <p>during her many years of love, care and interest for us her family as well as her friends and acquaintances! Her thankful children and grandchildren:</p> <p>Cootje &amp; Jaap VanderVeen Riek, Jaap, Margreet &amp; Rinus (Susan, Jeroen), Marjoke &amp; Loek, Gien, Frans Frank &amp; Ann Guillaume Claudine, Franklin, Susanne Betty &amp; Herman VandeBurgt Roland, Madeleine, Ian, Geoff, Mark, Maneka August &amp; Harnette Guillaume Joylene, Lisa, Franklin, Tamara</p> <p>Open house, Saturday, Jan. 16, 1993, from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. at Holland Chr. Homes, Trinity Tower Recreation Room.</p> <p>Congratulations only, no presents please.</p> <p>Address: c/o Holland Chr. Homes, Hope Tower, Apt. 204, 7900 McLaughlin Road South, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p>	<p>De Lier January 14 1993</p> <p><b>WILLEM and PAULA VANDERMEER</b> (nee MAST)</p> <p>"My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth" (Ps. 121: 2).</p> <p>With joy and thanksgiving we announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents.</p> <p>Lots of love Mom and Dad, Opa and Oma.</p> <p>Nick &amp; Antoinette VanderMeer — Whitby Elena, Corinna, Angie Ary &amp; Martha VanderMeer — Stayner Willem, Glen, John, Matthew, Andy Evelyn &amp; Pim Boekestyn — Niagara-on-the-Lake Pauline, Nicole, Mandy, Peter</p> <p>Home address: 65 Ellen St., Suite 702, Barrie, ON L4N 3A5</p>	<p><b>Obituaries</b></p> <p>Friesland Grimsby 1908 1992</p> <p>"The grass withers the flowers fade, but the Word of our God shall stand forever" (Is. 40: 8).</p> <p>On Sunday, Dec. 13, 1992, the Lord called home His child, our father, grandfather, great-grandfather and brother,</p> <p><b>HILLE DOUMA</b></p> <p>at the age of 84.</p> <p>Beloved husband of the late Klaaske Douma (nee Smids), (1983).</p> <p>Dear father and father-in-law of: Imie &amp; Allard Colyn Jane &amp; Clarence Huizinga Hilda &amp; Dirk Mechelse Bob &amp; Alice Douma Helen &amp; Gary Glasbergen Harna &amp; John Glasbergen Tilly &amp; Bill Bylsma Lou &amp; Grace Douma William &amp; Betty Douma</p> <p>Dear grandfather of 38 grandchildren and great-grandfather of 14 great-grandchildren. Also surviving are two brothers and one sister in the Netherlands.</p> <p>The funeral service took place at the Wellandport Orthodox Ref. Church on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 1992.</p> <p>Correspondence address: Imie Colyn, P.O. Box 99, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0</p>	<p>Feb. 3, 1910 Dec. 12, 1992</p> <p>"He is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Mark 12: 27).</p> <p><b>MIKE WESTERHOF</b></p> <p>went to his heavenly home Saturday, Dec. 12, 1992, at the Holland Home, Grand Rapids, Michigan.</p> <p>Beloved husband of Harriet (nee Minnema).</p> <p>Dear father of: Jack &amp; Pat Westerhof — Edmonton, Alta. Irene &amp; Jim Tuininga — Barrie, Ont. Doris &amp; Ron Van Houten — Grand Rapids, Mich. Harry &amp; Jan Westerhof — London, Ont. William &amp; Grace Westerhof — Lansing, Ill. Peter &amp; Mary Westerhof — Grand Rapids, Mich.</p> <p>19 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Correspondence address: Holland Home, 1450 Fulton Street E., Room 309, Grand Rapids, MI 49503</p>
<p><b>WHEN IT'S TIME FOR RESULTS... CALL THE CLASSIFIEDS!</b></p> <p>Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (416) 682-8311 Fax: (416) 682-8313</p>			<p><b>Teachers</b></p> <p><b>OSHAWA, Ont.: Immanuel Chr. School</b> will have a <b>part-time teaching position</b> open for a qualified teacher in <b>Grade 5/6</b>, from March to June, 1993, due to maternity leave. Please send a letter of application and resume by Jan. 20, 1993, to:</p> <p><b>Stan Baker, Principal</b> <b>Immanuel Christian School</b> <b>849 Rossland Road West</b> <b>Oshawa, ON L1H 7K4</b> <b>Phone: (416) 728-9071</b></p>	



## Teachers

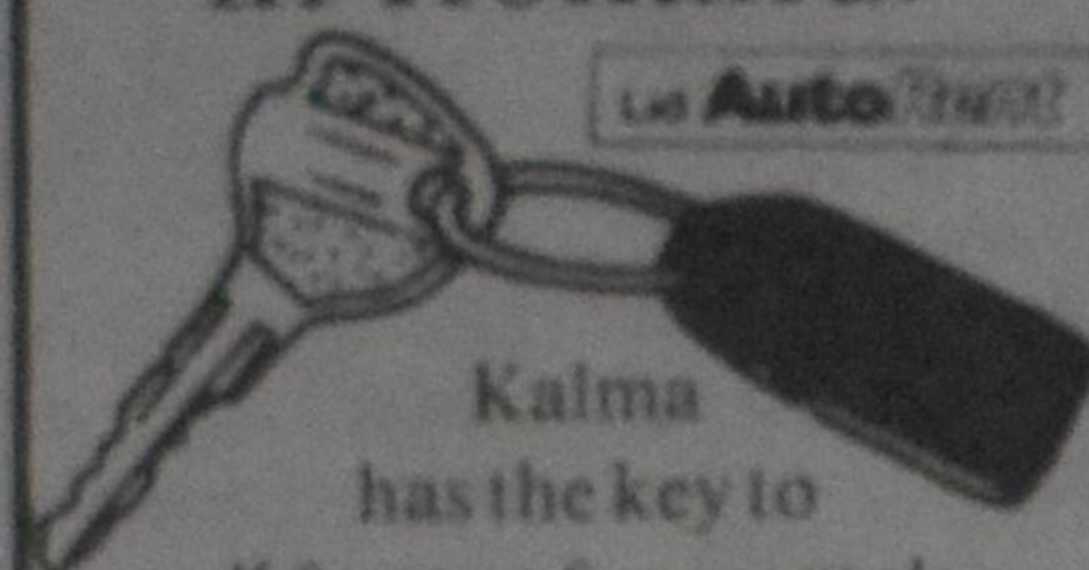
**Agassiz, B.C.: Agassiz Chr. School.** The position for principal in a growing rural Christian school of 106 enrolment is open, starting the 1993/94 school year. Applicants must be committed Christians with goal setting and vision skills. Administrative duties will be 40 percent; and classroom duties 60 percent. Closing date for the position is Jan. 31, 1993. Forward all applications to:

**Agassiz Christian School,  
Box 3230, Agassiz, BC  
V0M 1A0  
Attn.: Education Committee**

**Smithers, B.C.: Bulkley Valley Chr. School (K-12, 300 students on 2 campuses)** has, for Sept. 1993, a full-time position in French 4-12. Please address enquiries/resumes to the principal, Mr. Evert Vroon, c/o B.V. Christian School, P.O. Box 3635, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

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## Teachers

## EDMONTON SOCIETY FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BUSINESS MANAGER

(May 1, 1993)

Our present business manager is retiring and we are seeking a person to fill this position, which reports directly to the school superintendent.

Ideally, this person will possess an appropriate Accounting and Business degree (or equivalent combination of education and experience) and have a thorough understanding of Christian education from a Reformed perspective.

The person selected will be one

- who is a self-starter with good organizational talent.
- who possesses excellent interpersonal skills, oral and written communication ability.
- who is an experienced administrator with budgeting and financial planning skills, and knowledge of computer technology in the financial area.
- who is able to give motivational leadership to a small clerical group as well as to the wider sphere of volunteer activity, especially in the fund-raising area.

If this position attracts you, please send letter of enquiry and resume to:

**Dr. Wilco Vanden Born, Board chairperson**  
5711-139 Avenue, NW  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
T5A 1E8

before January 19, 1993.

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St. Catharines, ON  
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Clinton and District Chr. School will have an opening for

## PRINCIPAL

starting the 1993/94 school year. Clinton is located approximately 75 km. north of London, 18 km. east of the sandy Lake Huron beaches and only a short 45-minute drive from the famous Stratford Festival.

Our ten-room school with full-size gymnasium, has 218 students at the moment with a staff of nine full-time and two part-time teachers.

If you are interested, please send your application with complete resume to the Search Committee

c/o Mr. Ralph Schuurman, Principal  
P.O. Box 658,  
Clinton, ON N0M 1L0  
Tel.: (519) 482-7851

Timothy Christian School  
has a definite

## Principal

opening for the 1993-94 school year.

Our school of 130 students and nine staff was established in 1958 and is situated in a northwest suburb of Metropolitan Toronto known as Rexdale. If you are interested in leading a dedicated staff and being supported by a committed Christian school community, we invite you to apply for this position. We look forward to assisting you to use your talents and gifts in our school to help prepare God's children for service in His kingdom. Please send resumes or direct enquiries to:

**William Groot (416-743-2554 — evenings)**  
Principal Search Committee  
Timothy Christian School  
28 Elmhurst Drive  
Rexdale ON M9W 2J5



## Teachers

## Events

## Dordt College Openings

## Faculty Positions

## Education (three positions):

1) Two-year position with an emphasis in reading and language arts. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate courses, supervising student teachers, and advising students. Doctorate and teaching experience preferred.

2) Tenure-track position, elementary education focus is desirable but not required. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate courses, supervising student teachers, and advising students. Doctorate and teaching experience preferred.

3) Director of graduate education. Accreditation is being sought for a master of education program in elementary education. Responsibilities include providing administrative leadership and teaching some graduate and/or undergraduate courses. Doctorate required.

**Engineering:** Possible opening for individual with a background in either electrical or mechanical engineering. Doctorate and teaching experience desirable.

**Music:** Tenure-track position beginning fall 1994 for specialist in choral literature/conducting, with corollary skills in one or more of the following: choral or elementary music education, voice, music history, or composition. Ph.D. or D.M.A. and appropriate experience preferred.

**Psychology:** Possible tenure-track position. Teaching responsibilities in general and experimental psychology. Doctorate and teaching experience preferred.

## Administrative Position

**Counselor:** Two-year study-leave replacement. Responsibilities include personal counseling, student leadership training, coordinating personal growth workshops, and involvement in planning student activities. Master's in psychology, social work, or counseling and relevant experience required.

Dordt College seeks individuals who are committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy and have academic and personal qualifications for teaching and scholarship or administrative leadership. Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue until positions are filled.

For faculty positions send letter of interest, resumé, and graduate transcripts to **Dr. Rockne McCarthy, V.P. for Academic Affairs**, at the address below.

An application and job description for the counselor position may be obtained by writing **Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze, V.P. for Student Services**, at the address below.

*Dordt College strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, and disabled persons.*



**DORDT COLLEGE**  
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250-1697  
FAX: 712-722-4496

## Calendar

**Jan. 14-Feb. 12** Artist Greg Curnoe exhibition of paintings at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Opening **Jan. 14** at 7:30 p.m.

**Jan. 23** New Year's concert by the Con Spirito Choir (Sarnia), with organist Andre Knevel and flautist Carolyn Stronks. At 8 p.m., Christ's Church Cathedral, 252 James St. N., Hamilton, Ont. Tickets: (416) 648-6585/3170.

**Feb. 1-5** "Mission Emphasis Week" at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Various mission organizations will be setting up displays highlighting their programs 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Feb. 5** Organ/Trumpet recital by organist Christiaan Teeuwssen and trumpeter Stuart Laughton. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College Auditorium, Ancaster, Ont. For tickets, phone (416) 648-2131.

**Feb. 28** A Redeemer College home-coming concert for the choir. Conductor: Christiaan Teeuwssen. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College Auditorium, Ancaster, Ont. Freewill offering.

## THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE by Matthew Higgins

ACROSS

1 "Queen — Day"

5 Meat jelly

10 Do — on (treat shabbily)

14 Rainbow

15 Jeweled headpiece

16 Party snack

17 Corner sitter

19 Eight: pref.

20 Sign

21 Away from the wind

22 Erring pitcher

24 Gentle

25 Fillmore

26 Principal study areas

29 Cogwheel

30 "The Sheik of —"

31 Adjust

32 Likely

35 Like delicate fabric

36 Runs into

37 Graf —

38 Sort

39 Child's nurse

40 Former attorney general

41 Elevates

43 Two-wheeled carriage

44 Robin slayer

46 "— She Sweet"

47 Britain, to poets

48 Opposer

49 TV alien

52 Lee's troops for short

53 Pneumatic drill

56 Canter or trot

57 "A miss is as good as —"

58 Busy as —

59 Kett of comics

60 Horseman

61 Coal residue

DOWN

1 Suva's land

2 Algerian city

3 Haystack

4 Request

5 Coral islands

6 Fathered

7 Glass square

8 Wrath

9 Rifles

10 Handsome man

11 Impertinent fellow

12 Aquatic mammal

13 Vandyke

18 Hirsute

23 Landed

24 "— Dick"

25 Mathis hit

26 Bamako's land

27 Inland sea

28 Hare

29 Hammer head parts

31 Continue to subscribe

33 Mexican cash

34 Abound

36 Canning container

37 Mailed

39 Robert De —

40 Craving

42 Awn

43 To this place

44 Noncom

45 Cloth fold

46 Low joint

48 Etching agent

49 Pulpit of old

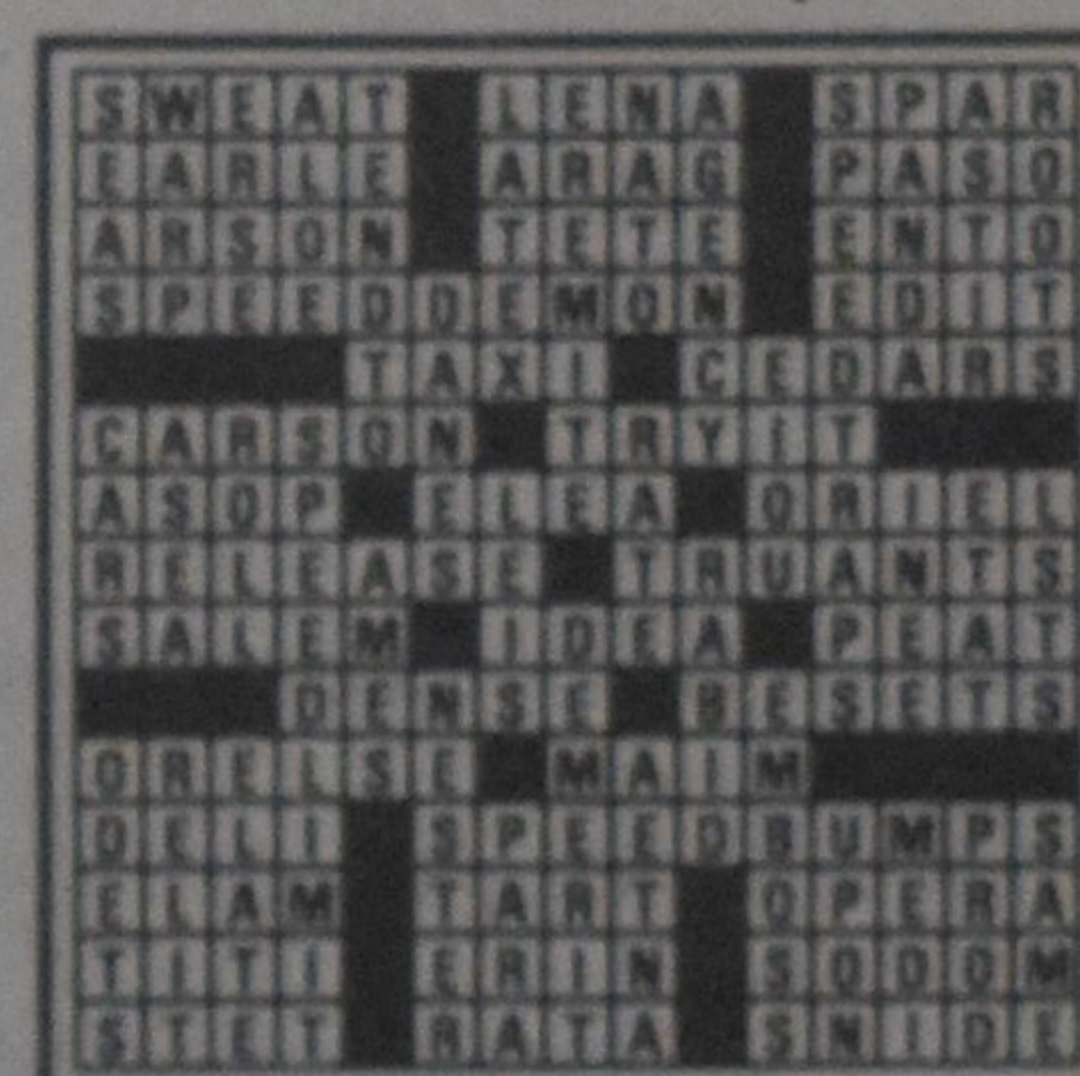
50 Onion kin

51 Gratis

54 Friend in Cannes

55 Unknown fellow

## Last week's puzzle



## Miscellaneous

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Willem J.B. Meyer, Q.C.

Sy L. Wassenaar, Q.C.

Martin Banach, LL.B.



## Church

## Church news

## Christian Reformed Church

## Clarification of previous announcement

Some readers apparently misinterpreted the "New Clerk" information we recently published for First CRC, Sarnia, Ont. The church has a new address but the (new) clerk has not moved.

Both addresses are as follows:  
First CRC, 1105 Exmouth St., Sarnia, ON N7S 1W5.  
John Visser, Clerk, 85 Turner Drive, Sarnia, ON N7S 5G6; (519) 344-8300.

## American Reformed Fellowship

The weekly worship services of the American Reformed Fellowship, Palmetto, Florida, will be conducted by Canadian Reformed ministers Rev. J. VanRietschoten during January and Dr. Jelle Faber during February. All are welcome. For information call: (813) 722-5001, or (813) 955-4497.



# There are ways to develop lasting peace in Somalia, says Mennonite advisor

**Bill Fledderus and John Lederach**

HARRISONBURG, Va. (MCC) — "We need a comprehensive, creative approach to restoring peace in Somalia," says John Paul Lederach, who works for the Mennonite Central Committee's international conciliation service. "Such an approach must address both immediate humanitarian concerns and the long-term challenges of transforming the conflict in Somalia."

Lederach has worked with Somalis to create a regular forum, known as *Ergada Wadatashiga Somaliyeed*, for dialogue across clan lines. More recently he also participated in consultations with the United Nations personnel responsible for developing a national reconciliation effort. He envisions the following steps to

help develop long-term peace.

## No high-powered conference

Despite the urgency of Somalia's situation it would be a mistake to push for an immediate, high-profile, internationally convened peace conference of select Somalis, says Lederach. Such an event would only create increased suspicion. Somalia does not need a trickle-down approach to peace, he says.

Somali reconciliation must instead be based on regional sub-clan and inter-clan consultations that build toward a national forum. These consultations have already started in numerous regions. They have been well-documented and attended by international observers.

The central and southern areas of Somalia, where interna-

tional troops are concentrated, must not create a Mogadishu-centred peace process, he advises. The peace process must reflect the deep aspirations of all regions for attaining a voice in the affairs that affect them locally.

In favour of this approach, the international community should encourage and support the logistics involved in local and regional peace conferences, building toward a national conference.

## Re-empower traditional leaders, poets

Negotiating with those who control guns is crucial so food can be delivered, but it is not the key to long-term peace, says Lederach. Continued focus on armed groups enhances their status and power.

Long-term transformation

must create a Somali peace constituency that serves as an infrastructure for reconciliation. In Somali society that infrastructure lies in the foundation of traditional elders, intellectuals for peace, religious leaders, poets, traders and women. Priority must be given to re-empowering key cultural and historical institutions unique to Somali society and to integrating them into the peace process.

## Supply radio news

Somalia is an oral society. The international community should help establish and maintain a "radio for peace" that provides regular and unbiased information about the peace process. As much will be accomplished for sustainable peace with regular, objective information via radio — airing regional peace conference reports, poetry for peace, advocacy for dialogue from elders and religious leaders and concrete details of humanitarian relief delivery and plans — as with the placement of 30,000 troops.

## Offer alternatives to 'sustenance by gun'

Relief efforts must be linked with serious programs for disarmament and strengthening the arms embargo, Lederach says. The challenge is to initiate and maintain the transition from sustenance by gun to sustenance by work and civil government.

A comprehensive approach to peace must create alternatives to militarization. This can-

not be simplified to creating proper law enforcement, nor a formula of food or cash for weapons. A broader socio-economic view of the situation suggests development and employment packages in exchange for weapons, especially targeted at youth.

Likewise, the cycle of weapons and munitions entering the situation must be addressed with the same seriousness as placing 30,000 international troops in the country. This calls for international will and regional coordination to stop those who simultaneously fuel the conflict behind the famine and profit from it through weapon sales and trafficking.

Pilot projects aimed at providing training and employment for weapons, targeted especially at youth in the country, are needed. Further, research on arms movements in the region and into the country could be funded, regional conferences could be convened to establish mechanisms for arms control, and direct pressure could be used to target the handful of people who are profiteering from the sale of weapons.

To fund these efforts Lederach suggests all governments and international agencies providing relief aid make a voluntary commitment to a "self tax" whereby at least five percent of the money spent on food, medicine and delivery logistics be given to conflict resolution and reconciliation activities.

## Christian old age home in Ontario opens new wing

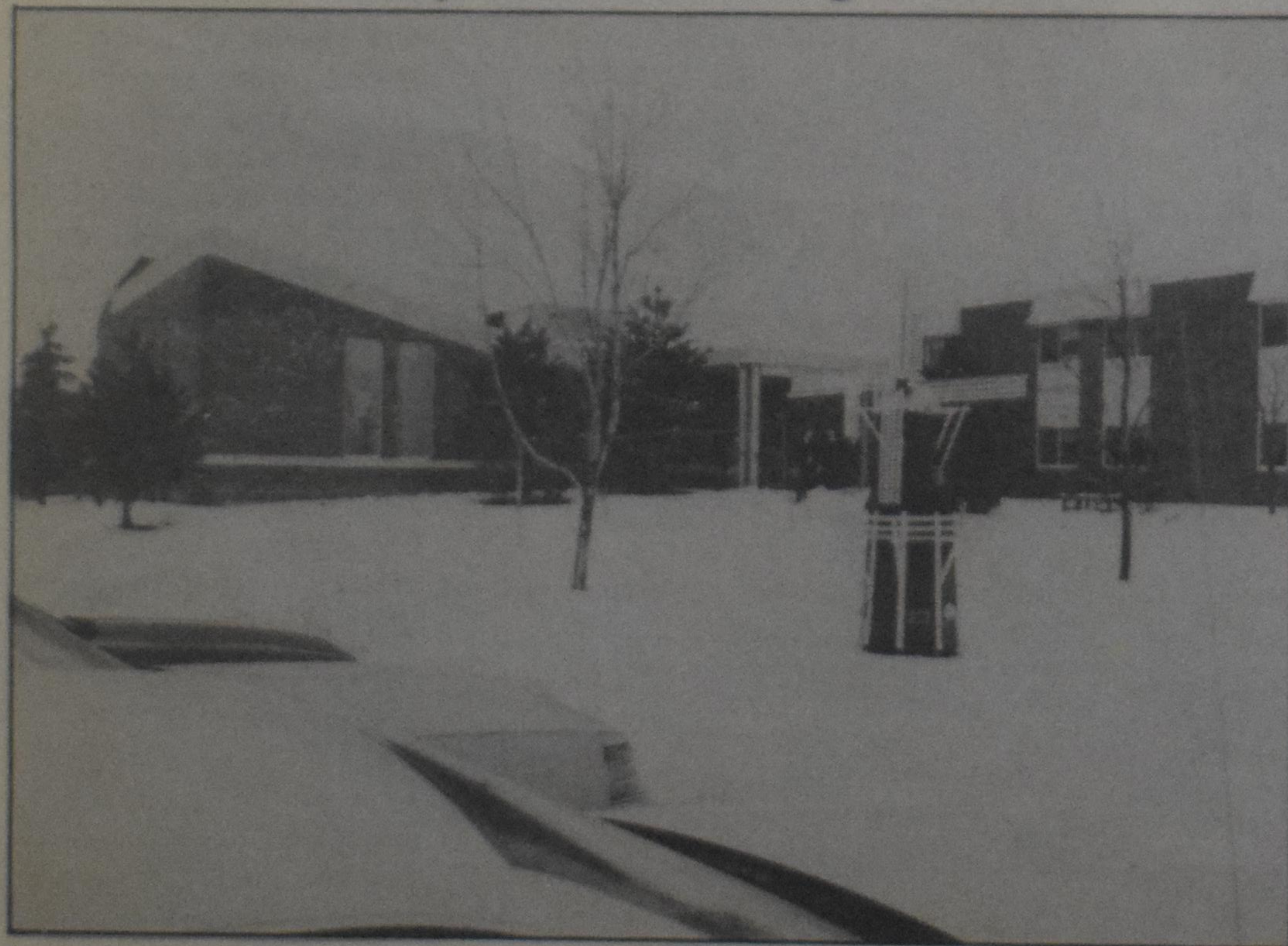


Photo: Bill Fledderus

At Shalom Manor, a home for the aged in Grimsby, Ont., two well-wishers emerge from its recently completed \$3.9 million addition. A grand opening of the enlarged facility, owned and operated by the deacons of the Niagara and Hamilton classes of the Christian Reformed Church, was held in December. It now boasts an additional 29,000 square feet and a total of 132 beds.

*Look for  
Peter and Marja  
on page 15*



## News

# Rich nations should stay outside debtor's door, says Dutch economist

Mark Vander Vennen

TORONTO — The nations of the North need to take their cue from Deuteronomy 24:11 and stay outside the debtor's door, says Dutch economist Bob Goudzwaard. He was speaking to about 60 people at the Institute for Christian Studies, a Christian graduate school in Toronto.

In a speech contrasting the dynamic of the Gospel with the dynamic of debt, visiting speaker Goudzwaard outlined a proposal designed to help them do just that.

Goudzwaard is professor of economics at the Free University of Amsterdam. He has extensive Third World experience, having acted as chair

own, are born into an astonishing debt obligation.

All of this coincides with the fact that in 1990 there was a net transfer of 20 billion dollars from the South to the North. In other words, a central component of the standard of living of the North is subsidization by the South.

## Debts increase

But Goudzwaard stated that it is the "dynamic" dimension which contains the core of the global debt problem. In graphic detail, he described how uncontrollable external events in the global economy create a rigid "law of enforced indebtedness."

He also showed that a poor harvest, for example, can create rising indebtedness even though countries are paying off their loan obligations, because new loans are required.

Indebtedness can also rise significantly because nations are paying off their loans. Rising exports designed to generate income for debt repayments can saturate markets, which causes such a significant drop in prices that export revenues decrease in the midst of increased production.

## Harsh creditors

And together, these dynamic realities lead to the "law of rising impoverishment" while paying off loans, due to the harsh economic adjustments required by creditor nations in exchange for debt restructuring.

It is particularly in the final law of the debt dynamic that the nations of the North have entered full-bore into the home of the debtor and turned its contents upside-down, Goudzwaard stated. In striking contrast, almost no structural adjustments are required of the United States, even though it is the largest debtor nation in the world.

## A new spirit

Goudzwaard contrasted this debt dynamic, which leads to death, with the dynamic of the Gospel, which leads to life and *shalom*. These two dynamics are concretely at work in today's world, he said. He relayed a moving incident

that occurred two years ago during a conference of the African Council of Churches in Lesotho, where Goudzwaard acted as an advisor.

For several days, the conference was filled with endlessly bleak reports chronicling the effects of the debt crisis on Africa. But the next morning the conference began with a reading of Nehemiah 5. Immediately a new dynamic entered the room. Not only did those present find an almost instant identification with the debt crisis described in Nehemiah 5, but new hope, new courage, new humour and a new plan of action sprang up as a result.

## Debt forgiveness

Goudzwaard pointed to the Lord's Prayer, where the word "debtor" in Greek refers solely to economic debts. And he appealed to the year of jubilee in the Torah, which lies at the heart of the Scriptures. Here debts were cancelled and people were economically restored to the position of their forebears.

But is this possible? Do we not need a credit system in the economy, asked Goudzwaard? Does not forgiveness of debts destroy economic life itself?

On the contrary, answered Goudzwaard, the Scriptures make clear that it is a Sabbatical forgiveness process which upholds economic life and makes it possible. It is precisely the reality of continually self-perpetuating debt which threatens to destroy our economic system.

This system is so skewed that each day-and-a-half an amount of currency equal to the total debt of the Third World circulates in the world economy because of currency speculation. This reality itself threatens the survival of the world monetary system.

## An act of wisdom

Goudzwaard concluded by proposing that the poor nations be permitted to create currency to reduce their debt burden, currency which is therefore acceptable in the international exchange.

This requires, however, that the wealthy nations reduce their own volume of currency creation. And this cuts to the quick of the spiritual nature of the debt crisis, for less currency creation means a lower standard of living.

Yet one should not construe this step as "sacrifice," said Goudzwaard. "Sacrifice" is a profoundly religious term and ought to remain so. Rather, the North must see it as an act of wisdom.

Such a step would release the inhabitants of the North from a current barrage of products and would create new possibilities of neighbourliness, en-

## News Digest

### Group warns of most threatened ethnic groups

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Bosnian Muslims, Kurds, Mozambiquans, Peruvians, Rohingyas, Somalis, Sri Lankans, south Sudanese and Tuaregs. In all the world these are the 11 ethnic groups most threatened by warfare and oppression, according to the international relief agency *Médecins sans frontières* (Doctors without Borders). Agency president Dr. Rony Brauman announced this list in a recent interview with the Associated Press.

The Tuaregs, who wander the Sahara desert across Mali, Niger, Algeria, Burkina Faso and Libya, may be unfamiliar to many. Tuaregs have suffered clashes with other groups in many of those countries over the past two years, so that at least 100,000 are now refugees.

### Crossroads forced to lay off 77

BURLINGTON, Ont. — The company which produces the Christian television show "100 Huntley Street" has temporarily laid off 77 people. Crossroads Christian Communications is attempting to cope with the pressures of the recession and with the increased operating costs of its new Burlington facility, says Dick Gray, vice-president of broadcasting, in an interview with *Christian Week*.

### Most Quebec students believe in God, afterlife

MONTREAL — Over 60 percent of Quebec high school students say they believe in God, according to an informal survey taken by the province's department of education.

Other results: 84 percent pray at least occasionally, 46 percent believe in life after death, about 33 percent have a Bible, 21 percent believe in reincarnation and 14 percent believe in resurrection. Respondents also appeared to have high moral standards, concern for social causes and interest in current events around the world, according to *The Winnipeg Free Press*.

Survey results are based on 5,800 responses returned from a mailing of 10,000 questionnaires. Respondents are aged 12 to 17 and attend all types of public and private schools.

environmental sustainability and increased time in people's lives. Goudzwaard claimed that it would help to liberate not only the poor, but also the rich.

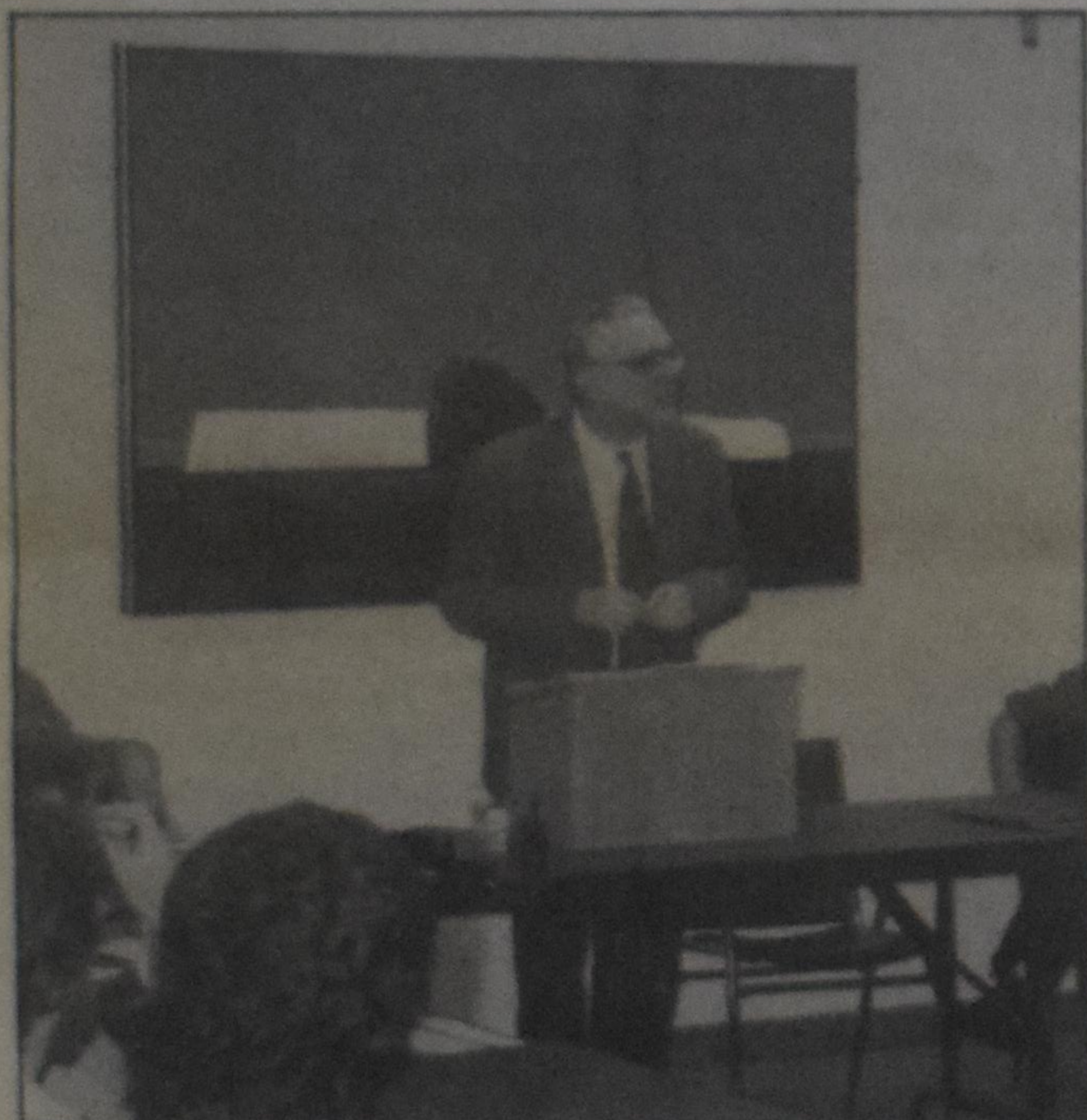


Photo courtesy ICS

Goudzwaard offered a biblical alternative to debt dynamics.

of the Dutch Interchurch Coordination Committee for Development Projects for 10 years.

## A world of debts

Goudzwaard observed that in 1990 the total external debt of the "developing countries" reached \$1.35 trillion U.S. To make this figure concrete, he said that each inhabitant of the rich countries of the northern part of the world holds a claim of no less than \$1,350 (U.S.) on the debtor nations of the Third World. This means that each of us receives from the Third World an average of \$200 per year in interest payments.

Conversely, the total debt of the poorest countries of the world is about \$81 billion, which translates into \$175 per capita in countries where income is no more than \$273 per year per capita. This means that children in these countries, through no action of their